

Encounter

December 1972 35p

THE TRAP OF IDEOLOGY

THE CONTROVERSY
TILL NOW

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H.J. Eysenck

THE DISPOSSESSED
Ferdinand Mount

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from Paris
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(a story)

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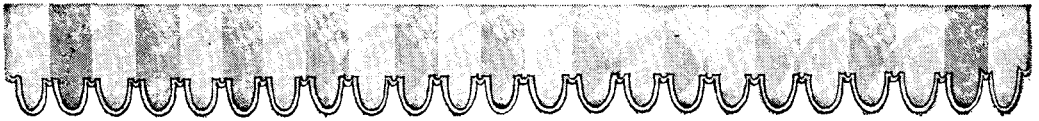
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Encounter

DECEMBER 1972

VOL. XXXIX NO. 6

Edited by MELVIN J. LASKY and D. J. ENRIGHT

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Published monthly by Encounter Ltd. at 59 St Martin's Lane London WC2N 4JS

Per copy: UK 35p: USA & Canada \$1.25: Back numbers 35p (\$1.25).

Annual subscription: UK £4: USA & Canada \$14 (by air \$15.50): Elsewhere £4.95.

Full-time students (state place and course of study): UK £3.15: USA and Canada \$10: Elsewhere £3.15.

Trade/Subscription Department: Encounter Ltd. 59 St Martin's Lane London WC2N 4JS (01-836 4194).

US news-stand distribution by Gordon & Gotch (USA) Inc. P.O. Box 6014, Long Island City, N.Y. 11106.

Authorised as Second-class mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa, and for payment of postage in cash.

Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. © 1972 by Encounter Ltd.

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Inklings

DURING ONE of those seaside holidays soon after the Great War, four children, the Blairs and the Wilsons, were arguing about Mrs Wilson's lover, referred to as Mr Thing, the Captain, or Mr Morgan by Tweets Wilson.

On this particular evening they were all four of them feeling cross about things. Henry Blair asked Tweets what was the matter and her young brother Dennis answered that it was Captain Morgan.

"Will he have arrived yet?"

"Expect so."

"Of course he will," said Tweets. "It's the weekend."

"You can't count on it."

Henry stopped them, saying "There'll still be time to go and play in the garden for a bit and anyway I want to see them."

"So do I," said Enid, his little sister. "We don't even know his name yet. Mr Thing could be anyone."

"He is called Mr Morgan," Tweets said.

"Captain Morgan," Dennis insisted. "He was in the army during the War. He always carries a little stick with a knob on the end of it."

"My old man's a dustman," Tweets chanted. "What do you think of that? He wears a dustman's breeches and he wears a dustman's hat."

"Oh the War was ages ago."

"Ten years, wasn't it?" Henry suggested.

"Eight" said Enid.

"Twelve for me," said Tweets. "If none of us can remember, what does it matter?"

"He must be brave, anyway."

"Very brave. He's got medals and even if he hadn't it'd make no difference."

"My father was in the War too, but he wasn't particularly brave as far as anyone knows."

THEY HAD THROWN away the eels and the crabs they had caught and were soon at the Wilsons' garden which was far enough from even the highest tides to need only a low retaining wall at the bottom. Facing this there was a wooden verandah with steps which descended to a sandy lawn in which grew small salt plants like samphire, sea holly as well as daisies, dandelions and grass. The paths were pebbled and bordered with worn oyster shells, pieces of sandstone and fiery lumps of granite. Yellow broom grew sharply upwards in isolated clumps; tamarisks with red stems and needly leaves, bracken and dry patches of heather.

The four of them played hide and seek and sardines in which Tweets was It. Henry found her first hiding in the bracken, stretched out against the side wall, her bobbed hair smelling of heather and itself. They huddled together and she let him kiss her on the lips. They could hear the others growing impatient because the spreading shadows were making it more difficult even for Dennis who knew the whole place. Breaths of sea mist came over the low wall beyond them. The seven o'clock rumbled like unplaceable thunder over the viaduct, not huffing or panting but slowing down, restraining itself for the station on the far cliff.

"They'll be under the verandah," Dennis said, and they both wanted to call out that he was cheating; but Enid probably didn't care whether they were or not, because she would be watching the train and thinking about the viaduct at home and the eleven-pound baby her nanny had talked about so much.

Henry and Tweets knew that in any case they'd be found soon and become each other again, talking and separated.

"Why do you like it?" Tweets whispered.

"I don't know."

They heard a car coming down the hill,

quietly, free-wheeling probably, and she wanted to get up at once but he held her closer.

"Do *you*?" he asked.

"Do you mean do I like kissing or do I know why?"

"Oh what does it matter?" he mimicked.

She sat up then, looking away from him towards the road.

"Yes," she said. "But I don't quite know why. Come on, the Captain's arrived."

Still above the viaduct the sun was rounder now, rayless, as big as a half-crown. The windows facing the sea looked as though they were backed with gold foil, reflecting nothing and revealing nothing. The four of them sat on the sea wall. They heard the seven o'clock draw out of the two-platform station, the separate steam clouds thrusting up to the gilded sky, each one followed a few seconds later by the sound of its blow from the funnel. The verandah door opened inwards and Mrs Wilson stood there in her short dress framed by the coppery rectangle.

"She's wearing her green," Tweets said to herself.

"It looks gold to me," Dennis said. "In the afternoons she puts up her parasol to stroll along the beach."

If you mixed green and gold you might get a silvery look like the rest of her, Henry thought.

"I don't think she's noticed us," said one of the others.

"Who would, in all that glare? You don't see a thing when it's like this."

"Deafening," said Tweets. "Quite deafening. All that light silencing even the sea."

"You're talking like an actress in a play," Henry told her.

"I meant to. It was one of the lines on the wireless last week."

"But people aren't like that, are they? They don't talk like that."

"I don't know, it all depends, on who's listening or who they think is listening."

"Well, as far as your mother knows, no one is."

"There's the Captain."

"No he's not. She's alone."

"I didn't mean that. I meant that he is the audience while he's having his wash and brush up and getting the drinks."

They swung their legs over the wall on to

the high tide shingle, knowing that their heads would be hidden by the broom spears. Dennis wanted to throw stones at a pyramid of other ones but they stopped him and he said, "But I like the Captain. I like his stories and I don't mind him making up games and swimming on his back and his bribes."

"Oh shut up."

"What bribes?"

"Sweets and presents from Huddersfield, games, etcetera," said Tweets. "If only everyone would keep quiet."

"Just tell us is your father really a sailor," Enid begged.

"Not now. He was to start with; but these days he's a business man."

"In Huddersfield," finished Dennis, "where we used to live. And sometimes he has to go abroad."

"Quiet! The Captain's coming out."

MRS WILSON had turned sideways to them, very slender; her hands together just below her hips and they could hear her as he came out carrying the tray with the glasses and things on it.

"No idea where they can have got to."

The Captain was slender too, tall and trim with a small dark moustache. His cuff links glinted as he put the tray down and poured the drinks.

"Not in the least," Mrs Wilson was saying. "They're with the Blair children somewhere. I suppose I ought to worry but I never do. How was your week?"

"Oh not bad. Things are picking up slowly despite the bloody trades unions."

"What a soft voice he's got," Henry said. "You can't imagine him commanding, yelling at troops and things."

"He's got a wonderful yell, you ought to hear it."

"Do be quiet, Dennis."

"What a super gin and french!"

"Biscuit?" asked the Captain. "Couldn't find the butter I'm afraid."

"You are an old thing, Bill; it's always on the second shelf in the larder and you never—"

"I'm always a bit fagged out by the time I get here but you wait. After a couple of these—"

They saw her hand touch his lightly as

she said: "A weary week, a weary week. Work, work work. Telephones ringing, secretaries—"

"Not for me, darling. It's the waiting for starter's orders, the gun at twelve sharp."

"And they're off," added Enid.

"He didn't say that."

"Not this time."

"Well, people have to start a conversation somewhere."

"Don't be boring, Henry."

"And how did she go?" asked Mrs Wilson.

"Like silk, touched sixty-five over the moors. But it's quite a drive. Can't think why he wanted to plant you down here."

"I—"

"You wanted him to, I know. Good old Arthur. Quite a good chap really."

"If only—"

"We won't start on that one. It gets us nowhere."

"I was going to say it's not only possible, it's perfectly easy to be fond of two people at the same time."

"Or three," he said. "But for me it's strictly one at a time."

"That's horrid of you, Bill."

"She doesn't mean that," Tweets said. "Or perhaps she does. In any case she'll have another drink. There you are. She is!"

"Shopping," the Captain was saying. "Take shopping. Tobacconist for tobacco, garage for parts, tailor for clothes, shirt shops for shirts. You don't mean to say you'd like to go into one bloody great building and come out with the whole shoot at once."

"My tobacco, shirts, parts?" They saw her thin bracelet shaking.

"I was being cautious and you're avoiding the issue."

"I can't answer it. I really can't. It's true that it would all be horribly impersonal, but it might be much better for one's nerves than all the little affairs one has to have to get exactly what one wants in the little separate shops."

"Well, I can tell you I'd like to be behind the counter in them all—but only for you."

"At present," she said. "And who knows how long that's going to last. Heavens, where can those children have got to?"

"I'll give them a yell."

"No, don't do that. We'll give them another ten minutes and then if they're still

not in sight I'll put on a cardigan and go and find them. Bring in the drinks, there's a dear, and go in and put your feet up."

"Alone?" "No, not alone. As Arthur would say, 'Kitchenwise everything's under control'."

They went in one after the other to the glimmer of August firelight leaving the door open behind them.

"Hooray," said Dennis. "We can stop hiding and hear a story. Want to come too?"

"You and Enid go first," Henry told him. "Say Tweets and me are on our way."

"Tweets and I," she corrected him.

They walked slowly over the purpling shingle in their damp gritty gym shoes and stopped by the Captain's car parked neatly by the hedge which curved into the little drive.

"Why do you dislike him so?"

"I don't, I just can't get used to him that's all. His conversation is so easy to spot and then he says something unexpected. And he's not really quiet at all."

"Are you jealous?"

"Jealous!" She dropped his hand at this. "Jealous of whom?"

"Heaven knows. Your mother, your father, or even Captain Morgan."

"I don't think I am."

"After all, he's quite young. Only a little more than twice your age."

"I know."

"Well, is he attractive?"

"He's interesting but he alarms me."

"Frightens you?"

"Oh I don't know. I just wish we were like other families, that Daddy didn't keep disappearing on those business trips of his. Who knows what he's up to."

She walked over to lean against the big pine tree and he saw the little whiskers shining on her legs, her hair ruffled and shining too.

"Is that what your mother thinks?"

"Yes."

"And you do too?"

"Yes, I do and that's that," she said. "You can come in for a few minutes if you want to. They wouldn't want you to stay long even if you could because after supper while we're listening to the wireless they'll go off for their drive."

THEY WENT in through the front door down the hall and into the sitting room where the carpet was soft, the verandah door shut, and where everyone was. Mrs Wilson was sitting on the fire stool with her arms drawn round her knees. Dennis was on the old velvet sofa with the Captain and his pipe, Enid was sitting upright in a huge armchair.

"The Boche I remember best," the Captain was saying, "was wrapped up in barbed wire. He'd been there about a week I should say and might have looked quite good if it hadn't been for the flies."

"Were they all over him?"

"All over him until the platoon came up. Looked like a full dress uniform—navy blue you know," the Captain paused, filling his lungs and thin cheeks with air and roared out "Zoom" so loudly and suddenly that everyone jumped. Mrs Wilson, whose slender legs had straightened, picked up the little silver snake of her bracelet and fastened it quickly again on her left wrist, laughed in a way and started to say something.

But the Captain drummed briefly on the coffee table, watched closely by Dennis who was leaning forward looking red and sturdy.

"Left, right, left," the Captain said so distantly that the noise of the glasses against the decanter was as loud as spurs. "The squadron trotted on and—"

"Squadron, I thought it was a platoon," said Tweets. "It started off as a platoon."

"It was, but it makes a better story don't you think?"

"Much better," said Mrs Wilson. "A squadron sounds—Henry! Are you all right?"

"Of course he's not," said Tweets. "That story gets worse every time we have to hear it."

"I must admit," said Mrs Wilson taking a cigarette from the silver case which had appeared in the Captain's long hand.

"Don't," he said. "Never admit, never—"

"Volunteer," Tweets finished snappishly.

Mrs Wilson got up gracefully. "What about Bovril for everybody before they go home?"

"It's very kind of you but we're late already."

"Stand not upon the order—"

"In fact, run," said Tweets. "We'll come with you if you like."

"I won't. I'd like to hear another story

while Mummy gets the supper."

"That's the stuff, Dennis. A peacetime one about the General Strike."

"But I like the War ones best."

"You wait. I was driving a bus. Only weapon a cosh, against the bloody pickets and one dirty evening by the Elephant and Castle—"

"Bill dear, I really do think—"

"So do I."

"He doesn't," said Tweets when they were in the blazing half light outside. "Unless of course he does it to fascinate Mummy."

"The latter," Henry said. "Is it really true this new car's got a self-starter?"

Henry and Tweets were on the running board. "Are you sure it's not just one of those handles you keep pulling like the one on the two-seater Trojans?"

"It's that brass button on the running board. He presses it and 'bang' it starts."

"Zoom!" you mean."

"Zoom! That's it. I am fond of you, Henry, I really am."

THEY WALKED slowly down the road and across the bridge each holding one of Enid's cold little hands.

"Do you like him, Enid?"

"I don't know him but he's awfully noisy in a quiet way."

They looked at each other, smiling over her head, loving her more than anything else they could see.

"She's awfully cold. We'd better run and give her swings the rest of the way."

"As far as our lodgings," he said, "and then a last look at things for today."

"What about your parents?" Tweets asked.

"Enid'll tell them, if they're there. I shouldn't think it's much after nine."

"Come back soon, won't you?" Enid said.

"Yes pet, just a few minutes. Tell Nanny about Mrs Wilson and the Captain."

"No," said Tweets. "Just tell her what we played."

"Don't worry, I wouldn't in any case."

"Not even if she asks you?"

"I'll think of something—the games and things."

Tweets kissed her outside the little gate of the lodgings and they ran down to the high tide mark and the cleaned sand below it.

"What about tomorrow?" she said.

"Heaven knows. We don't even know if our landlady's baby will have arrived. Mummy says she'd never have booked if she'd known it was so near. It's going to be an awful carry-on when it does. Do you know exactly what the doctor has to do with it all?"

"Practically nothing. You don't really believe they bring them in their bags, do you?"

"No, but I have to pretend to because of Enid and people."

"It's all very simple really," she said. "But with some women it's the done thing to make a huge fuss about it."

"The working class?"

"Heavens, no. That's just snobbery. I meant what I said, 'Some women'."

"We've tried to work it out at school. We know about the rude part, but we simply can't get anybody to tell us how the baby gets out."

"I'll tell you another time. Next holidays."

"I'll have started at my public school by then; so—"

"And by the way," she said, with the very clear look she sometimes gave him. "I don't think there *is* a rude part."

He did not kiss her as he had intended. After they had gone a little way, when she was standing against the nearly colourless sea and he had paused by the viaduct, they both stopped to look back. They called out "Goodnight" and "Tomorrow" without caring who heard them.

IN BED HE THOUGHT, this house is too small to have babies and visitors in it at the same time. When the doctor had gone and the baby stopped crying and was making little wet noises through the wall he went to the top of the stairs to listen to Mother and Father who were in the tiny sitting room with Nanny. Through the open door he heard his mother asking Nanny about Mrs Wilson and Captain Morgan. He couldn't make himself stop eavesdropping. He'd been so certain they were talking about the new baby.

Nanny, who didn't care for the subject, was bravely evasive, switching to them, himself and Enid, Dennis and Tweets. "They're very good company for each other. I let them stay out a little later this evening because I thought she's at her time and so did the doctor. And

they're obedient, Mrs Blair, quite obedient, very good children and poor Mrs Wilson gave them hot Bovril and the Captain was telling them all stories by the fire."

"What sort of stories?"

"He was telling them about the General Strike and his new car with the starter button."

"And before that. What were they doing before that?"

"Who?" asked Father.

"Mrs Wilson and her lover." Mother snapped. "Who else do you think I could possibly mean?"

"The children, dear. The trouble is that you will switch the subject so quickly."

"Nanny knows perfectly well, don't you Nanny?"

"Well, I'm sure," said Nanny, sounding as if she was having one of those sips of her celebration tonic wine. "I did think you mean the children and their games. They've taken against the donkeys and the shells and it's been hide and seek and sardines today."

"Does the Captain spend the night there, that's the question. I don't want the children mixed up with you know perfectly well what I mean, sex."

"Enough said," Father decided. "What about a cup of tea?"

"And what a lovely little thing she is," said Nanny. "Not a wrinkle on her and so quick to take her milk."

"Captain Morgan," Mother started.

"He goes to his hotel over at wherever it is and doesn't come back until Sunday lunch-time."

"And that's another thing. She was a churchgoer last year."

"The children still go, Mrs Blair."

"Well, that's something though how long they'll keep it up if this keeps up—"

Henry heard the rattle of tea cups, the talk slowly settling as outside, minute by minute, the sea drew back down the sand to its bedrock, the lazy waves falling easily, section by section, so softly, so certainly.

Her attack completed, Mother wasn't going to disturb anything more. Nanny wasn't to be drawn into overtiring herself with the baby. They would all eat over at the hotel for the rest of the week and she'd have a chicken or two sent over for the Pybuses.

"I know what you are when there's a baby

within reach. You'll be up and down the stairs—"

"And I'll be on the sands."

"For tuppence she'd be on the donkeys too, wouldn't she, Geordie?"

"I would that."

"Those days are over for us."

"I've often thought, Mrs Blair, that they

needn't be if someone would only start growing them bigger. Those Americans—"

"Engineers," said Father. "The largest donkey anyone can get, Nanny, is a large mule and that's where it ends because all mules are mares and they can't breed."

"Stubborn things," said Nanny as the front door closed.

Snowdonia

No longer as when a boy I now
 Can float up the varieties of a mountain:
 From the time when I could do this how
 Changed. No, no more will it come back again.
 Great sadness would be in this if I did not
 Discern a new way of going like fresh apparel
 And as one way perishes with my ageing body, a new route
 Unfolds itself so that it is both greeting and farewell.
 What do I greet? It is the closure of
 Certain obvious kinds of physical celebration
 Makes me turn to what did not exist when with extreme love
 I could marry my body to the rocks. Clearer
 Now I turn to what stays when the body cannot do this
 And know that to the nerve I am coming nearer.
 It is death we are born for. So I libidinise that vacuum
 And strenuously as when I strove up the rock edges
 Practise that summit to which I must come.

Thomas Blackburn

The Sense of Dispossession

IT IS NOT SO MUCH facts as theories which shape world-views. We are familiar today with the way in which political theory and practice derive both structure and colour from the organisation and selection of facts by powerful intelligences or by a powerful intellectual tradition. What F. A. Hayek calls “the primacy of the abstract” reinforces itself with the passage of time. As a theory gathers support, its underpinning of factual observation becomes more and more remote from the centre of the debate. Discussion of the theory itself takes on a life of its own. The theory’s relation to reality is cursorily assumed. The theory reaches its apotheosis both when it is incorporated into the academic curriculum and when it comes to form part of the language of public debate, even to the extent of a political party gathering around its ideological banner. A theory which has failed to reach this level of popularity remains in close contact with the material evidence supporting it. This is no doubt an honourable relation, but a theory in this position has little effect on thought or action. It has no power either to illuminate or to alter the world, remaining as it does hardly more than an observation.

A certain well-known explanation of a congeries of even better known modern events has, in my view, reached and failed to go beyond just such an undeveloped stage. The events themselves are so important that this explanation deserves to be elaborated, rather than just accepted as an evident and unfruitful truth. For if the explanation is correct it ought to saturate both our thoughts and our actions. It ought to be isolated so that it can conveniently be referred to and brought into play without laborious preliminaries, just as we can lay our hands on such concepts as “the Revolution of Rising Expectations” or “the Class War.” I should emphasise therefore that I do not hope to startle the reader in my collocation of public events or in my development of a single explanation for them. My aim is simply to show that we have not thought enough about that explanation, nor given it the priority in our calculations which it deserves.

WHAT I AM REFERRING TO is perhaps best described as “the sense of dispossession.” We have known this phenomenon under many names and forms through the ages which stretch from the psalmist’s lament “How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a strange land?” down to the insouciance of black Olympic athletes during the playing of *The Star-Spangled Banner*. The sense of dispossession has been the cause of innumerable fears, hatreds, riots, expulsions and above all massacres. Because of it we live in a century of refugees and pogroms. We also live in a century whose dominant literary and psychological theme is that of alienation, of man’s estrangement from himself, his work and his world. We cannot in fact make any true separation between the inner and the outer senses of loss. The political and the psychological permeate and reflect one another. The loss of home, the resentments of physical exile, the deprivation of the familiar things and relationships which give meaning and relish to life, these shade into the less material sense in which we say that a man feels he is an outsider, a stranger, an alien.

A WIDE VARIETY OF contemporary tragedies have as their motive forces this sense of dispossession. What drives young Arabs to commit acts of unspeakable barbarism—acts which more often than not cost them their own lives—is clearly the sense that they have been robbed of the lands of their fathers and that in the process their own culture has been brutally smashed by the invaders. Even optimistic believers in *kebab-Arabism* (cf. “goulash-Communism”) would hardly claim that better food, housing, and sanitation for the Palestinian refugees would dispel such resentments. I must stress here that I do not wish to fall into the heresy of “not condoning and yet condoning”—a practice rightly condemned by Bernard Levin and others. I wish to explain, not excuse. The foulest barbarity must have some explanation, though it may not be one which has a political remedy.

The Palestinians claim to have lost both their physical and their spiritual home. Even though they may still be encamped on home ground, they are but servants in their father's house. They have been dispossessed. Seen in this light, the resentments of the Ulster Catholics fall into the same class. They enjoy full rights of citizenship; increased subsidies from London may assure them prosperity; they may come to enjoy complete equality in access to housing and employment; yet the sense that they have been dispossessed may remain as strong as ever. The contrast with the Southern Irish is marked. In theory most of the latter may accept that Ireland is not truly home unless it is united, but their daily *experience* is of possession; their dispossession being not only partial but remote and theoretical, their commitment to the achievement of homecoming remains equally tepid and incomplete.

Similarly, East Prussian refugees settled in the Federal Republic speak German, live on German soil, are governed by Germans in whose election they participate as full citizens. Their daily experience, too, is of possession. Their nostalgia for Königsberg and the Baltic coastline is real; but, lacking the harsh impetus of dispossession, it is not transformed into action. As time passes, their *Landesmannschaft* is increasingly revealed as an impotent sentimental entity more akin to the London Scottish Rugby Football Club than to a political force. The exile's resentment at the transformation of Kant's Königsberg into Kaliningrad comes to resemble the sensation we all experience on returning to the home of our childhood to discover it demolished, or a factory towering over the bottom of the garden; such an experience arouses the melancholy recognition that we are growing older, as we must, rather than a desire actually to return to childhood. But suppose that the official language of the West German Federal Republic was one largely inaccessible to the Prussian refugees—Dutch, say—or that the refugees were granted only partial citizenship, or that they were more or less compelled to live in a refugee enclave, even a comparatively well-appointed one. Unassimilated, they would remain East Prussians still. In such circumstances, what chance would Willy Brandt have had of pushing through even the mildest form of a new *Ostpolitik*? It is true, as Lord Acton says, that “exile is the nursery of nationality, as oppression is the school of liberalism . . .” But it is the circumstances of exile which deter-

mine the vigour and passion with which nationality is pursued.

THE SITUATION of Black Americans is more complex. Like other races, they have made their own kind of America, their own insulation against the bleak and disorienting threat of the melting-pot. But, although they remain recognisably American (strikingly different from, say, Black Africans), they are distinctly less American than Hungarian, Greek, or Polish settlers in the United States. In reality the difference between the Black experience and that of European immigrants is total. It is the difference between those (a tiny fraction in the history of the human race) who have made an active and voluntary choice of their home and those who were brought to America in chains. You cannot be brought home against your will. What you leave voluntarily (even if that volition is precipitated by a potato famine) begins to cease to be your home the moment you leave it. Affections can be kept alive in the memory, but they are no less subject to the blurring and fading of time than any other sentiment. In Thomas Wolfe's phrase, “You can't go home again.”

Only persecution—the insistence that however long the immigrant has been settled here, he remains an alien—can give renewed edge and colour to the image of a true home elsewhere. What but the seemingly endless recurrence of persecution on a vast scale could have shaken so many solid, apparently *settled* citizens all over the world into giving such vigorous reality to the poetic wish “*Next year in Jerusalem . . .*”?

THE EXPERIENCE OF DISPOSSESSION, though history may express it as sudden collective eruptions, is individual and continuous. Each man must keep on feeling not at home, ill at ease, deprived for himself. To give expression to these feelings in such a way that large numbers of sympathisers are stirred to join together in action requires not only energy above the ordinary but, as often as not, an extraordinarily strong sense of dispossession. This super-homelessness frequently takes the form of being a half-caste (how difficult it is even for persons almost devoid of national feeling to use that word without an inflection of contempt or at best pity). Only by leading the homecoming can he earn his full right to a place by the hearth. Sadder still, the leader has often been deprived of an emotional home as well as a

cultural one. John Stephenson (alias Sean MacStiofain), the brutal leader of the IRA Provisionals, is an extreme example. He chose both his name and his country, but only revolutionary success of De Valera proportions will still the muttering both in Dublin and in Belfast about "John Stephenson the Englishman." With little or no Irish blood in his veins, Stephenson was born and bred in London. His childhood was agonising. His father was a terrifying drunk, his mother and his sisters left home when he was nine years old. His mother died, and he resented his stepmother. He sought and found a home in the bitter-sweet nostalgia of an old Sinn Féiner, who was the father of a boy he had known at school and who was kind to him. The details (authoritatively told by Ivan Rowan in the *Sunday Telegraph*, 10 September 1972) are appalling.¹

Nationalism is the most striking political phenomenon of our times. And it so happens that the instances of both psychological and political resentments which I have given so far could be grouped under the heading of Nationalism. The association between nationalism and dispossession has always been close. Mazzini, who brought the expression of national feeling to a ripe floridity which has never been surpassed, called the Italians "poor Israelites among nations" who had to seek their fatherland. Yet the feeling of dispossession stretches far beyond the context of the Nation-State.

At a pinch the resentment felt by white Englishmen at the arrival in their midst of considerable numbers of Asians and West Indians could also be called "nationalist", although the resentful are more likely to call themselves patriots and their critics will call them racists. But the resentment of the London dockers whose lives are being altered out of all recognition by technology is clearly a feeling of dispossession which has nothing to do with Nationalism. So is the militancy of the shipyard workers on the Clyde, who successfully postponed the execution of the verdict of the market, namely that their work was on balance no longer of value to society. The decline of an area or an industry not only throws people out of work but also brings about a great change in their physical landscape (shops and cinemas close, factories crumble,

governments build bleak high-rise blocks). Drastic change of this sort also transforms family life. As in the case of Negro migrants from the Deep South to the great cities of the northern U.S.A., the women and sometimes even the young may find it easier to get work than the middle-aged man. Disraeli noted a similar phenomenon in the mills of the first Industrial Revolution. Mrs Carey in *Sybil* laments "Fathers and mothers goes for nothing . . . 'tis the children gets the wages." Disraeli also noted the splitting up of families under this economic pressure.

"My daughter . . . has left us. She has long murmured at her hard lot; working like a slave and not for herself. And she has gone, as they all go, to keep house for herself."

"That's a bad business," said the watchman, in a tone not devoid of sympathy.

"Almost as bad as for parents to live on their children's wages."

It may seem that there is a distinction to be drawn between the splitting of families by such pressures and splitting which is reinforced by the law as in present-day South Africa. But the important question is whether the divided families feel the existence of such a distinction. The real distinction is surely between the sense of dispossession induced by involuntary separation and the sense of exhilaration experienced at least in the early days of the *kibbutzim* by the voluntary separation of families.

THE RESENTMENT of the collectivised peasant farmers in the U.S.S.R. is a particularly interesting case. Productivity on these farms is abysmally low, enthusiasm markedly absent. Yet the peasant is relieved of many tedious and back-breaking responsibilities; and the living he used to make was never princely. Even the most passionate believer in economic incentives must be a little surprised at so total a failure of the collective ideal. Perhaps the peasant's discontent is more easily understood if we consider his plight in terms of home rather than of economic motives. Perhaps he has always regarded his plot as being as much part of his home as, say, his kitchen. To be forced into a collective farm may well be for him not merely a question of no longer working for himself as the equivalent of being compelled to take communal meals—a practice which all collectivists from Plato onwards have seen as crucial to the destruction of family life.

Even the above brief list of examples shows that the sense of dispossession is not confined to

¹ In a later interview, Stephenson/MacStiofain objected violently to Mr Rowan's article but gave no specific denial to any of the detailed assertions made in it (*The Observer*, 1 October 1972).

the Haves or the Have-nots; it is not the prerogative of Right or Left, of progressives or reactionaries. Often the dispossessed are the patients of technical change, but sometimes they are its agents, as in the impetus given by Nationalism to the development of ex-colonial societies. Communism, Fascism, Capitalism, Liberalism, Socialism, Conservatism—all may find themselves in alliance or in opposition to this most powerful of social forces.

Yet the concept of “home-seeking” as an autonomous political force has received remarkably little attention, at least by political scientists. Politicians tend to take account of it only when the already dispossessed bulk large in their constituency. How slow they are to foresee a threat of dispossession brought on either by their own actions or by outside forces! Sociologists have done a little better in their studies of group loyalties and what Karl Mannheim called “the fruitful aspects of resentment.” But even the sociologists have never really elaborated the positive notion of “home” which is what gives the resentments and loyalties their motive force. T. B. Bottomore remarks gingerly:

the political community as a nation-state . . . has received relatively little attention from sociologists. Indeed, it may be argued that the significance of the nation-state has been altogether underestimated, especially in its bearing upon the development of capitalism. Similarly, nationalism as an ideology, and its connections with religion or class interests, have been much less closely investigated than have other political ideologies. Yet the force of nationalism in the modern world is very great, and creates problems in relation to international order.³

Compare the thin and hesitant quality of Emile Durkheim's evocation of *The Flag* with the rich and sure touch of Sir Walter Scott's description of the dispossession of the Highlanders, the breakdown of their society after the Stuart rebellions. A cyberneticist in a recent short story by Penelope Gilliatt reflects:

“We are supplanted as soon as we're born, that's the feeling. Deposed heirs, that's the feeling. No armies. He fleetingly saw his species in the grip of this innate sense, an old intimacy with dispossession that human beings seemed never quite to lose, although it had always been better known to literature than to politics or to his own science.”

In an age when psycho-social explanations of the way we live now are so much in vogue, why should this be so?

³ T. B. Bottomore, *Sociology: a Guide to Problems and Literature* (1971), p. 157.

I THINK THE REASON is basically the intimacy and particularity of the idea of home. It is something like the philosopher's attempt to construct a class of incontrovertible statements by means of the concept of sense-data. Only I can say whether I feel at home. You can tell me that this is a hovel, that I have come to the wrong place, that it is a house of ill-repute, that the enemy will be here in ten minutes, or that the roof is going to fall in. But still only I can say in the last resort whether this is my home. And my statement is by definition correct. Anyone can deem any place, any social system, any set of circumstances to be his home. Other persons may seek to prevent him from settling in such-and-such a place on the grounds that he will be better off in a spot they have chosen for him. But if he refuses to regard that spot as his home, it isn't his home; and whatever measures they take to make him settle there are measures to dispossess him. That is what home means.

The introduction of dispossession as a major theme poses several problems for the political theorist.

First, some of his definitions lose much of their force. Nationalism, for example, has been variously defined as a force for social change, or as essentially racial, or as based on linguistic homogeneity, or as a product of social upheaval, or as a political expression of the territorial imperative. In many instances such definitions give us valuable insights, in others they don't. On the other hand, Nationalism is *always* in one way or another a search for home. So it might in general be more useful to see it as that level of home-seeking which demands definition in a Nation-State (rather than in regional, municipal, or domestic independence); in other words, to see Nationalism as the most important sub-class of a core-idea rather than as itself the core-idea. By seeing the repression of national feeling as just one way in which a man's total sense of identity may be crushed we can begin to understand why nationalism is such a shatteringly powerful force. Otherwise, it is inexplicable that the Nation-State, this somewhat bizarre entity, should have claimed so many million human sacrifices.

ELIE KEDOURIE in his classic study of Nationalism argues that “nationalism is a doctrine invented in Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century.” It was a projection into the social arena of Kant's idea of self-determination as the

highest moral and political good, and it was particularly calculated to appeal to passionate young men for whom "mean provincial towns where nothing ever happens, dusty libraries, prosaic lecture-rooms became the stage of an absorbing secret game, a game of hide-and-seek, in which nothing was as it seemed, and everything took on the glowing colours of romance."³ Nationalism is not a timeless urge; it emanates from the spirit of a particular age. Ernest Gellner⁴ develops this theme further in claiming that nationalism is the consequence of a particular stage of social change. In modern society every man has to be a clerk to get along. The illiterate starves. Modern industry, commerce, and bureaucracy demand a *lingua franca*. Naturally the language employed is that of the imperial power, leaving the natives qualified only to hew wood and draw water. Hence the rise of linguistic nationalism. The ambitious young native wants the top jobs which the imperial power reserves for its own people. In order to gain control, he turns the simple heads of his fellow-natives by spinning golden visions of life after independence and by awakening his hearers to the injustice of their present servitude. Hence the formation of nationalist movements. Modern society also erodes local structures—the tribe, the village, the region. People become all the more loyal to the nation-state because they have no other body to protect their interests.

Men, [says Gellner] do not in general become nationalists from sentiment or sentimentality, atavistic or not well-based or myth-founded: they become nationalists through genuine, objective, practical necessity, however obscurely recognised.

In other words, we are to understand that once again sociology has succeeded in its characteristic method of *unmasking* people's real motives. According to Professor Gellner, the rhetoric clouds but never entirely hides the material interests which lead men to die for an apparent abstraction.

Now unmasking is a useful method of procedure when men are in fact wearing masks; the self-seeking of nationalist leaders certainly deserves study. But are the peasants and workers who listen so intently to those leaders also wearing masks? And if so, why? For it is not as if they were unused to, or put off by, speakers who make straightforward promises of material

benefit—higher wages, shorter working hours, better schools and hospitals. But the strange thing about nationalist rhetoric is the comparative absence of such promises. Naturally hope of material benefit would be a reason for giving support to a nationalist movement but not, it seems, a sufficient reason. In many cases, the nationalist leader promises and indeed delivers long and considerable hardships. He may even gain support by publicly glorying in his indifference to expert advice that the proposed Nation-State will not be "economically viable". Nationalism is indeed a peculiarly modern phenomenon with its own specific determinants in intellectual and economic history. But this does not mean that we can explain how a nationalist movement derives its explosive force by studying those determinants in isolation from quite different types of determinants which have caused cataclysms of similar force at other times in human history—civil wars, crusades, pogroms, revolutions.

SECOND, THE SENSE OF DISPOSSESSION cuts across the theorist's lines of argument. Men may mourn the loss of their landscape as a result of the activities of totalitarian governments, or as a result of the action of market forces, or as a result of non-political technical change, or as the result of an upsurge of rival claims on the homeland. Dispossession has no universal cause, nor do any of the sequences which *can* result in dispossession invariably do so. Attempts therefore to indict a particular social system—capitalism, communism, imperialism—as endemically liable to cause dispossession are usually dishonest.

Third, insofar as the theorist is concerned with prescription rather than description, the concept of dispossession challenges his qualifications for the job. What right has the theorist to tell me how the world around me should be organised when only I can recognise and define my home which is the centre of that world? If the theorist concedes the people's right not merely to choose but to furnish their own homes, the awful abyss of relativism yawns before him. Indeed the theorist himself is suddenly threatened with dispossession—out of a job, all his long-loved intellectual furniture, his whole conceptual tool-shed up in smoke.

Concepts like "oppression" or "the right to self-determination" no longer seem so simple to use. They are workable so long as they are

³ Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism* (3rd ed., 1966), pp. 9, 103.

⁴ Ernest Gellner, *Thought and Change* (1964), pp. 147–78.

grounded in verifiable, often quantifiable criteria: "This area is 95% Ruthene, *ergo* Ruthenia has a right to live" or "These people are getting less than half the daily calories they need, don't have the right to vote, and 70% of the taxes they pay end up in numbered Swiss bank accounts, *ergo* they have a right to rebel." But suppose their sufferings are not so material, suppose also that we concede them the right to define the nature of their own oppression, can we deny them either the right to say just how bad that oppression is (*i.e.* feels to them) or the right to define their own methods of liberating themselves? There is a conflict between the belief in the right of self-determination and the belief that politics must be conducted according to moral principles; and it is a conflict which is inherent in liberalism. A striking example is the statement of Mr Jeremy Thorpe, leader of the British Liberal Party, at his party's 1972 Assembly:

Those living under extreme oppression with no hope of remedy through peaceful or legal means are morally entitled—if all else fails—to use every means at their disposal to liberate themselves. But outrage for its own sake has no justification.
(*Evening Standard*, 20 September 1972).

Every means? Then why not outrage, if the guerrillas judge that to be the best method of promoting their cause? Suppose only outrage, acts of extreme barbarism, will achieve the liberation, what should the freedom fighters (and their far-away patrons and well-wishers) do then? Mr Gladstone, magisterially secure in his own definition both of oppression and of atrocity, was blissfully unaware of such complexities.

PERHAPS THIS IS WHY the theorist tends to use such contemptuous language about the kind of feelings I have been discussing. He calls them "irredentist", or Luddite, or racist or chauvinist or reactionary. There is a bitter edge to these epithets which is absent from their counterparts in normal speech—"blimpish", "old-fashioned", "stick-in-the-mud." We also have to take account of the singular reluctance of the modern social scientist to deal in the qualitative. Nothing can be less quantifiable than the sense of dispossession. True, you can count the heads of the dispossessed but you cannot count what is going on inside them. Even to attempt to analyse political emotion may still today be dismissed as "mere psychologism" unworthy of the notice of the man of science whose job is to study only social forces.

Nor have practical men of affairs (who ought to be in continuous contact with public feeling) done much better. Time and again, governments have failed to grasp the underlying reason for an active regional policy; namely, that the economic decline of a region is not a matter of mere inconvenience to its citizens but rather involves the destruction of much of life's meaning for them. Many people would rather lead a financially precarious existence in a place where they had once been happy than move to an assured job in a new town; and what is the generation of wealth for if not to make people happy? Vast sums of public money are regularly expended in the promotion of other goods such as "growth", "efficiency", "research", and now "environmental well-being." Yet only recently have sums of remotely comparable magnitude begun to be poured out in the aim of permitting people to continue living in the town where they were born. Until the last few years, in fact, the existence of ghost towns, new towns, and boom towns in a country was regarded as something to be envied, being indicative of mobility and hence of dynamism. We have now begun to wonder if mobility is an essential precondition of dynamism and, regardless of whether it is or isn't, if dynamism should necessarily be our first priority.

THE NOTION OF DISPOSSESSION also has much to teach in the realms of international *realpolitik*. If expansionist régimes had been able to foresee the results of their actions, they might have been rather more careful about their methods of occupying foreign territory. Blatant dispossession is liable to involve the imperial power in a never-ending series of repressive actions against local guerrillas. A "Finnish solution" is surely preferable; it costs the imperial power less in blood, treasure and anxiety, and it preserves a great deal of what the Finns consider worth having.

Above all, by taking the notion of dispossession as a central theme the politician is better able to see what people actually want. At present the slogan—"participation", "self-government"—often conceals instead of dramatising the desire. A man may well not wish to have the bother of real participation in the decisions which affect him crucially. He may just want the existing authorities to stop intruding upon the fragile domestic stabilities he has so arduously won. In other words, when, say, the line of a new motorway is

being decided, he wants his personal priorities to "participate" in the calculations of the decision-makers, not to join in the deliberations of the decision-makers himself. Similarly, it is possible that people may not really wish to govern themselves. A colonial system of legislative councils may give the average citizen more real power over his own life than does an authoritarian post-colonial régime. All the same, he may prefer the latter because what he really wanted was *not to be governed by those people*—because they were uninvited intruders who, politically speaking, left his home only under the threat of force; because they were of a different race, colour, region or religion; because they were strangers.

The politician might also come to see that home is home and not something else. You cannot make it more homely, only less so. The addition of a porch over the front door just keeps people dry in the rain; it does not of itself make the house homelier. Most of us remember the way in which as children we refused for years to accept as part of home a change which was in material terms an undeniable improvement, in some cases continuing to refer to it frigidly as "the new porch" until we were quite grown up. Thus the sense of being dispossessed of some precious part of home cannot be assuaged by an extraneous gift, however lavish. Welsh nationalism cannot be quenched by large financial subsidies from London. The only gestures relevant are gestures of restitution—official recognition of the Welsh language in schools and law-courts, for example. Of course it is possible that in this sphere, too, there will be a revolution of rising expectations. Each fresh gesture may intensify the vision of a regained homeland. But material affluence in itself is likely only to give people leisure to reflect on what they have lost and might have again. It takes no Tocqueville to note that Northern Ireland's rate of economic growth during the present troubles has been one of the highest in Western Europe, or that "Black Power" is the child of relative Black prosperity.

THE REAL NECESSITY is to concentrate the attention on the central and deflect it from the marginal or the irrelevant. Here is an example of what I mean. Professor David Daiches, in a gentle and civilised letter to *The Times* (London, 14 September) recalls the history of Palestine in the hope that "a careful reconsideration by both sides of the *history* of these events will help to give each a better understanding of the other."

In particular, he makes the point that the refugees from Nazi Germany, who

poured in illegally in face of the opposition of the British Mandatory Government, did not steal any Arab land or terrorise any Arabs or dispossess any Arab family. The land in possession of Zionist settlers in Palestine up to the declaration of the State of Israel was *bought* from Arab landowners, often at inflated prices, to a considerable extent with the pennies subscribed weekly by humble Jews all over the world.

Mr Michael Adams (20 September) adds a gloss to the effect that the new Jewish owners did expropriate the Palestinian *tenant farmers* whose resentment helped to fuel the Arab rebellion of 1936–39. In theory all this is a valuable contribution to the debate. In practice it is academic. The crucial fact is that the Palestinian Arabs are no longer masters in the land of their fathers and that they have been replaced by the Israelis. The actual method of their replacement is therefore bound to be encrusted with bitter legend which it is futile to attempt to remove. For even if it were possible to show that no Israeli had ever broken any law during this process of replacement, the Israelis would still be there. And the only way to reduce the Palestinian resentment is to reduce the Israeli presence in one way or another—territorial, political, or cultural.

AT AN INFINITELY MORE TRIVIAL level, there is growing resentment in the country districts of Britain—particularly in Wales—at the influx of prosperous city-dwellers buying weekend homes. When questioned about their feelings, the country people say that the influx not only reduces the number of cottages available for their own use but also vastly inflates the price level. The city-dwellers readily reply that in most cases they are doing up derelict cottages which the local people wouldn't touch with a barge-pole. Moreover, they claim, declining population and public housing programmes by county councils have abolished the rural housing shortage; the exurban influx means only a welcome injection of cash into the rural economy. Of course, what the city-dwellers are reluctant to face—and the country people too ashamed to state—is the underlying objection to their moving in at all. With their foreign English ways, their impatience, their immorality, their insensitivity, they are quite simply not wanted. They represent a deadly threat to the rural way of life. However, by persuading himself that the economic argument is all

that matters the week-end remains able to bask in rustic delight, oblivious of the sullen glowers of the natives.

Or is he oblivious? Does he not have an uneasy awareness of their true state of feeling? The sense of dispossession causes twofold damage, both to the dispossessed and to those whom they regard as responsible for their misfortunes. We are familiar with the sufferings of the American Negroes, the Ulster Catholics, the Ukrainians and so on. But we are only just beginning to connect these with the damage to the social fabric of the possessors—the appalling tensions of the Ulster Protestants, the harsh panicky tone in American life, the brutalism of Soviet culture, the *laager* mentality of the Israelis and the South African whites.

I DO NOT SUGGEST that the establishment of a Chair of Dispossessionology would solve the problems of dispossession any more than the establishment of institutes of Conflict Studies has abolished war. But I am certain that until the insights of Camus and Freud have been transformed into tools of political debate, we shall never fully understand what is amiss. Ideological notions like “the fight against racism” are merely confusing. This is not to deny the reality of racial feeling or the high probability of it having

evil consequences. But to regard it as something that can be tackled head-on is like trying to treat a poisoned finger without having any idea of the etiology of sepsis. The study of that etiology does not mean that you approve of poisoned fingers. Moreover, such noble ideals as multi-racialism and internationalism are tiny, frail craft. They can keep afloat only in the calmest of waters. Progress towards such aims can be made only when the number of people who feel themselves to be dispossessed has been reduced to a minimum.

The costs of dispossession far outweigh those of any other social motive. The resentments it engenders may fester over centuries. The violence into which it explodes is of an unparalleled ferocity. Political acts which do not involve the search for home—demonstrations against war or poverty, even many self-styled revolutionary manifestations—may pass off without much bloodshed or even lasting ill-feeling. But as soon as any aspect of a man’s identity is in question—his race, his homeland, the political rights which define his status, all the various elements of home—a terrible recklessness, an appalling commitment, is unleashed. For that reason the major task for the politician in this century more than any other must be to restore the sense of possession to those for whom its loss has robbed life of meaning.

The Conventional Love Song

I want to be the blue veins in your breasts,
a small serrated knife handled by you,
the bath water lying on your belly,
a glass of red wine staining your tongue,
a pair of your panties or an expensive bra,
anything close or useful (love is so useless).

What *you* must want to be is simply you.

Gavin Ewart

Seymour Martin Lipset

Ideology & No End

The Controversy Till Now

THE PROPOSITION that advanced industrial or post-industrial society would be characterised by a "decline" in—or even the "end" of—ideology was asserted by many writers during the 1950s and early 1960s, and has come under sharp criticism in recent years. Seemingly, the re-emergence of Left-wing politics in the form of assorted "New Lefts," and the growth of mass movements based on excluded elements (ethnic minorities, women, students), constitute *prima facie* evidence that the "end of ideology" writers were wrong. A whole host of left-wing intellectuals have emphasised this "error" in order to discredit "pluralistic" political analysis. They argue that its basic inadequacy has been demonstrated by the fact that some of its more prominent spokesmen mistakenly predicted "the end of ideology." Typical of such attacks were comments made in a recent review in the *Times Literary Supplement* of a book dealing with ideologies:

Not so very long ago Raymond Aron, Daniel Bell and Seymour Martin Lipset, among others, were confidently predicting the decline of ideological fervour in the Western industrialised countries. . . . The fact was, of course, that this itself was an ideology; a tacit one, no doubt, but one, nevertheless, that rationalised and supported the existing system. . . . In effect what the proponents of the idea of the decline of ideology were saying was that, in Mannheim's terms, utopia was dead. . . . This was wrong . . . the past two decades have been characterised by a growth and proliferation of total ideologies.¹

The implicit assumption in such criticism is that an alternative and more accurate estimate

was presented by radical thinkers who anticipated a revival of revolutionary working-class politics in the West. Generally, most of these polemicists make their point by ridiculing a variant of the "end of ideology," which was never stated by any of those attacked. More significant, however, as a phenomenon to be studied by those interested in the sociology of knowledge—of the ethics of controversy, or indeed the selective ideological character of memory—is the way in which these critics conveniently ignore the varying ideological background of discussions of the decline of ideology and political conflict in the years preceding the rise of the New Left. It may be worthwhile recalling a bit of that history for the record.

AS WITH MANY OTHER "politically relevant" concepts, the famous phrase first appeared in a Marxist classic, Friedrich Engels' essay on Feuerbach. Engels argued that "there would be an *end to all ideology*," unless the material interests underlying all ideologies remained "of necessity unknown to these persons."² That is, in so far as true consciousness existed, as men became aware of their real interests, ideology—*i.e.* the elaboration of false consciousness—would disappear.

Although other analysts, including Max Weber and T. H. Marshall, have been given credit for originating the more contemporary use of the concept, the record seems clear that the term as such appeared in its modern incarnation in 1951 by an active supporter of left-wing causes, H. Stuart Hughes, in an article entitled "The End of Political Ideology."³ Although he stressed the idea (subsequently developed in other discussions of the topic) that disagreements over methods were succeeding those concerned with ideological principles, Professor Hughes had himself been involved in the Henry Wallace 1948 Progressive Party campaign, described his politics as "socialist," ran in 1962 in Massachusetts as a Third Party "Peace" candidate for U.S. Senator, and was a founder and president of the peace organisation, SANE. Subsequently, in 1958, Bar-

¹ "We're All Totalitarians", in *The Times Literary Supplement*, 5 May 1972, p. 507. For a sampling of the literature dealing with the "end of ideology," see the two collections of articles: Chaim I. Waxman (ed.), *The End of Ideology Debate* (New York, Funk and Wagnalls, 1968), and Mostafa Rejai (ed.), *Decline of Ideology?* (Chicago, Aldine/Atherton, 1971).

² Friedrich Engels, "Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy," (1886) in K. Marx and F. Engels, *On Religion* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1957), p. 263. Karl Marx/Friedrich Engels, *Werke* (East Berlin, 1969), vol. 21, p. 303: ". . . denn sonst wäre es mit der ganzen Ideologie am Ende."

³ H. Stuart Hughes, "The End of Political Ideology," *Measure* 2 (Spring 1951), pp. 146–158.

rington Moore, Jr. (co-author with Herbert Marcuse and Robert Wolff of *A Critique of Pure Tolerance*), who comes closer to being an exponent of Marxist analysis in American sociology than any other major figure in the field, wrote of American politics that

as we reduce economic inequalities and privileges, we may also eliminate the sources of contrast and discontent that put drive into genuine political alternatives. . . . There is, I think, more than a dialectical flourish in the assertion that liberty requires the existence of an oppressed group in order to grow vigorously. . . . Once the ideal has been achieved, or is even close to realisation, the driving force of discontent disappears, and a society settles down for a time to stolid acceptance of things as they are. Something of the sort seems to have happened in the United States.⁴

Two other American academic figures, Herbert Marcuse and Kenneth Keniston, who have been widely recognised as university spokesmen for the revival of student activism in recent years, both once were convinced that there was little or no possibility of widespread conflict in contemporary society. A recent analysis of Marcuse's work by the French Marxist sociologist, the late Lucien Goldmann, is one of the very few stemming from the radical left to note the similarity between Marcuse's analysis and various less radical interpreters of the "end of ideologies." Goldman concluded that

it is still true that they all—Aron, Marcuse, Bell, Riesman—share the mistaken belief that Western society has been so stabilised that no serious opposition can be found within it.⁵

Time and again in his writings and public lectures, Herbert Marcuse reiterated his belief that modern industrial capitalism, through its ability to sustain abundance and entertainment, had eliminated all

but the slightest possibility for mass radical protest. Like Barrington Moore, he assumed that the class struggle in the West was all but over. In 1964, he commented that

In the capitalist world, there are still the basic classes [capitalists and workers] . . . but an overriding interest in the preservation and improvement of the industrial *status quo* unites the former antagonists in the most advanced areas of contemporary society.⁶

Marcuse's despair about the revolutionary potentiality of the working class is, of course, well known. Far less publicised is the fact that he was so pessimistic about the role of Blacks and Students that he openly opposed the participation of the first in the political process and of the second in the power system of the university—because the system is able to seduce both into basically conforming to the *status quo*. At a symposium in 1965 at Rutgers University, Marcuse stated that Negroes were brain-washed by American society and consequently follow middle-class norms in their political behaviour:

When asked which situation he preferred—one in which the Negroes were deprived of their civil rights, including the power to vote, and one in which they freely exercised the civil rights to choose "middle-class values" Marcuse replied: "Well, since I have already gone out on a limb, I might as well go all the way: I will prefer that they did not have the right to choose wrongly".⁷

Less than a month before the French "events" of May 1968, in an interview with *Le Monde* Marcuse stated:

Everywhere and at all times, the overwhelming majority of students are conservative and even reactionary. So that student power, in the event of it being democratic, would be conservative or even reactionary.⁸

By 1969, Marcuse, like many others, had learned that he was wrong. In his *Essay on Liberation*, he identifies the American "ghetto population" and the student opposition as major disruptive forces. Yet, it should be noted, he still concluded that a liberating "revolution is not on the agenda" of the advanced Western industrial states; that the combination of the necessary "subjective factor" (political consciousness) and the "objective factor" ("the support and participation of the class which is at the base of production") only "coincide in large areas of the Third World."⁹

Kenneth Keniston, though generally sympathetic to radical social change, has limited his writings largely to the field of student "alienation" and political behaviour, a subject he began investigating in the late 1950s. Yet in spite of his political concern and ideological predisposition, Keniston also wrote of the "decline of utopia" and the "quiescence" among students.¹⁰ His

⁴ Barrington Moore, Jr., *Political Power and Social Theory* (Harvard University Press, 1958), p. 183.

⁵ Lucien Goldmann, "Understanding Marcuse," *Partisan Review*, vol. 38, no. 3 (1971), p. 258.

⁶ Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man* (Beacon Press, 1964), pp. xii–xiii.

⁷ Leo Rosten, *A Trumpet for Reason* (1970), pp. 64–65.

⁸ This interview published in *Le Monde* for 11 April 1968 is cited in "Upsurge of the Youth Movement in Capitalist Countries," *World Marxist Review* (July 1968), p. 8.

⁹ Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation* (1969), p. 56.

¹⁰ See especially his book *The Uncommitted* (1965), and his articles, "Alienation and the Decline of Utopia," *The American Scholar*, (Spring 1960), pp. 1–10, and "American Students and the 'Political Revival'," *The American Scholar*, (Winter 1963), pp. 40–64. Both articles are included in his recent collection of essays, *Youth and Dissent* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1971) in which Keniston allows his readers to share his changes in evaluations as the years progressed.

conviction that American youth were inherently "predominantly apolitical" led him in 1963 to put "political revival" in quotation marks in the title of his article discussing "signs of increasing political activity on a number of campuses," and to devote most of the essay to analysing the sources of "apathy." He suggested that it "almost appears that affluence and education have a negative effect on political involvement, at least in America," a conclusion he was to reverse a few years later.

MY REFERENCES to the work of a number of scholars who have been identified with Marxism or whose scholarly writings include endorsement of various forms of left-wing activism as proponents of an extreme "end of conflict" variant of the "end-of-ideology" thesis, are not meant to suggest that their work gives the thesis a specific leftist ideological coloration. But given the polemical context of recent discussion it is important to note that various political persuasions, each in their own way, lent support to the idea. These include in addition to Daniel Bell and myself: two prominent American sociologists, David Riesman and Edward Shils; Raymond Aron, once a Gaullist; Herbert Tingsten, long-time editor of Sweden's leading liberal newspaper, *Dagens Nyheter*; Gunnar Myrdal, the famous economist and Swedish socialist leader; Dr Ralf Dahrendorf, probably the best-known of contemporary German sociologists, writing in the mid-1950s while still an active socialist; Stein Rokkan, president of the International Political Science Association; George Lichtheim, historian and theorist of socialism; Lewis Feuer, a former Marxist and a current exponent of psycho-analytic approaches to social analysis; the late Dr Otto Kirchheimer, Social Democratic émigré and political scientist at Columbia University; Dr Judith Shklar, Harvard professor, writing from the viewpoint of political theory; and Thomas Molnar, a conservative political theorist.¹¹

¹¹ Detailed references to most of the relevant works may be found in S. M. Lipset, *Revolution and Counter-revolution* (rev. ed., 1970), pp. 267-268, n. 1. See also: Judith Shklar, *After Utopia: The Decline of Political Faith* (1957), esp. pp. 218-219; Raymond Aron, "The End of Ideology and the Renaissance of Ideas," in his *The Industrial Society* (1967), pp. 92-188.

¹² Few now remember that Kennedy as President was under sharp attack from Left intellectuals for his depreciation of ideology and political activism. See Stephen W. Rousseas and James Farganis, "American Politics and the End of Ideology," in I. L. Horowitz (ed.), *The New Sociology* (Oxford University Press, 1964), pp. 268-289.

¹³ See Reinhard Bendix and Guenther Roth, *Scholarship and Partisanship: Essays on Max Weber* (1971), pp. 248-250.

Although John F. Kennedy has been given credit by some as ending the political quiescence of the "silent '50s" in the U.S.A., by giving voice to a new ideological commitment to the country's egalitarian objectives, thus inspiring student political activism, Kennedy himself espoused a version of the "end of ideology" thesis in public discourse in statements, the first drafts of which have been attributed to Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. Thus, in May 1962, he proclaimed that ideological division over basic issues was over; that there was no further need for "the great sort of 'passionate movements' which have stirred this country so often in the past." A month later, in a commencement address at Yale, the young President concluded that

the central domestic problems of our time are more subtle and less simple. They do not relate to basic clashes of philosophy and ideology, but to ways and means of reaching common goals.¹²

IT IS DIFFICULT TO ESTABLISH the exact development of the concept after Engels. H. Stuart Hughes clearly deserves the credit for reviving the phrase after World War II. Articles in *ENCOUNTER* by writers like Raymond Aron, Daniel Bell, and Edward Shils diffused it widely. Reinhard Bendix, the leading American exponent of Max Weber's work, has suggested that one of its earliest formulations was presented by him in his analysis of the consequences of electoral democracy. Max Weber apparently believed that the European type of Ideological Party, as represented before World War I by the German Social Democrats, would ultimately come to resemble the American political party which was so much less ideological, because of the need of all parties to build a bureaucratic machine in order to maximise electoral support.¹³ Two older European scholars, T. H. Marshall and Herbert Tingsten, enunciated the basic thesis without using the term in the late 1940s.

Various writings on "the decline of ideology" elaborated on the themes originally suggested by the L.S.E. sociologist, T. H. Marshall, that total ideological or revolutionary politics on the left were largely a phenomenon of the working-class struggle for citizenship: it resulted, in industrialised countries, in their incorporation as a legitimate partner in the resolution of issues through representation by political parties and trade unions. I myself have suggested that once "the workers have achieved industrial and political citizenship," and "the conservatives have accepted the welfare state," this would result in "a decline in the sources of serious political controversy" with respect to domestic issues. And implicit in the assumption that "inclusion" reduces the need for total ideologies on the part of previously excluded groups is the recognition

"that ethnic, racial or religious groups, like American blacks or Ulster Catholics, who are still deprived in citizenship terms, will continue to find uses for extreme tactics and occasionally ideologies."¹⁴

MY ORIGINAL ANALYSIS in *Political Man* was presented in the context of arguing against the theses of Barrington Moore and others on the impact of these changes in reducing class struggle. As I noted in 1960,

one wonders whether these intellectuals are not mistaking the decline of ideology in the domestic politics of Western society with the ending of the class conflict which has sustained domestic controversy. As the abundant evidence on the voting patterns in the United States and other countries indicates, the electorate as a whole does not see the end of the domestic class struggle envisioned by so many intellectuals. . . . The predictions of the end of class politics in the "affluent society" ignore the relative character of any class system.

In discussing the decline of Left sentiment among American intellectuals in the 1950s, I suggested that it was questionable

whether a permanent change in the [adversary] relationship of the American intellectual to his society is in process. In spite of the powerful conservatising forces, the inherent tendency to oppose the *status quo* will remain. . . . Any *status quo* embodies rigidities and dogmatisms which it is the inalienable right of intellectuals to attack, whether from the standpoint of moving back to traditional values or forward toward the achievement of the equalitarian dream.¹⁵

Similar assumptions concerning the continued concern of intellectuals, particularly young ones, for critical ideologies were made by Daniel Bell in his analysis in *The End of Ideology*.

The new generation of [intellectuals] . . . finds itself seeking new purposes within a framework of political society that has rejected, intellectually

speaking, the old apocalyptic and chiliastic visions. In a search for a "cause," there is a deep, desperate, almost pathetic anger. . . . In the U.S. . . . there is a restless search for a new intellectual radicalism. . . . The irony . . . for those who seek "causes" is that the workers, whose grievances were once the driving energy for social change, are more satisfied with the society than the intellectuals. The workers have not achieved utopia, but their expectations were less than those of the intellectuals, and the gains correspondingly larger.

The young intellectual is unhappy because the "middle way" is for the middle-aged, not for him; it is without passion and is deadening. Ideology, which by its nature is an all-or-none affair . . . [is] temperamentally the thing he wants.¹⁶

Curiously, though the tone and ideological content are evidently quite different, C. Wright Mills reached almost identical conclusions about the same time. Thus, in his famous "Letter to the New Left" (published in 1960), he stated: "generally it would seem that only at certain (earlier) stages of industrialisation, and in a political context of autocracy, etc., do wage-workers tend to become a class-for-themselves, etc." He described the belief of some radicals in the revolutionary role of the working class in "advanced capitalist societies" as running "in the face of the really impressive historical evidence that now stands against this expectation . . . a legacy from Victorian Marxism that is now quite unrealistic." And Mills also suggested that the social group which was most likely, given its structural situation, to be a source of continuing anti-establishment struggle, is the intellectuals.

It is with this problem of agency [of change] in mind that I have been studying for several years now, the cultural apparatus, the intellectuals—as a possible, immediate, radical agency of change . . . it turns out now, in the spring of 1960, that it may be a very relevant idea indeed.¹⁷

One specific criticism of the concept of the "end of ideology" has been made by some radicals who admit a congruence of empirical judgment with their own evaluation of erosion of ideological controversy among the major party protagonists in the western democracies; but they argue that those who have proclaimed the "end of ideology" have failed to recognise that the concept is a conservative ideological one, and that it contributes to the undermining of efforts at radical change. Thus, Stephen Rousseas and James Farganis have commented that "there can be little doubt that . . . [Bell's] arguments and that of Lipset on the decline, if not the end, of ideology as an operative force in the Western world are based largely on fact. . . ."—but they go on and argue that "C. Wright Mills would agree that the end of ideology makes a fetish of empiricism and entails an ideology of

¹⁴ S. M. Lipset, "The End of Ideology?", *Political Man* (1963), pp. 442–443; S. M. Lipset, *Revolution and Counterrevolution*, pp. 268–270. Marshall's analysis is presented in his essay "Citizenship and Social Class," first published in 1949 and reprinted in his volume *Sociology at the Crossroads* (1963), pp. 67–127. The American edition of Marshall's book was published by Doubleday under the title of *Class, Citizenship, and Social Development*. Talcott Parsons has extrapolated from Marshall's analysis with particular relevance to the situation of blacks in America. See his *Politics and Social Structure* (1969), pp. 252, 257–259, 261, 277.

¹⁵ *Political Man*, pp. 444, 371.

¹⁶ Daniel Bell, *The End of Ideology* (1962), pp. 404.

¹⁷ Reprinted in C. Wright Mills, *Power, Politics and People* (1963), pp. 256–7.

its own—an ideology of political complacency for the justification of things as they are. . . .”¹⁸ But, obviously, such an argument only reiterates a component part of the analysis they are criticising. In 1963 I attempted a comprehensive discussion of the sources and consequences of the “decline of ideology”:

Not only do class conflicts over issues related to division of the total economic pie, influence over various institutions, symbolic status, and opportunity, continue in the absence of *Weltanschauungen*, but that the decline of such total ideologies does *not* mean the end of ideology. Clearly, commitment to the politics of pragmatism, to the rules of the game of collective bargaining, to gradual change whether in the direction favoured by the left or the right, to opposition both to an all powerful central state and to *laissez-faire* constitutes the component parts of an ideology. The “agreement on fundamentals,” the political consensus of Western society, now increasingly has come to include a position on matters which once sharply separated the Left from the Right. And this ideological agreement, which might best be described as “conservative socialism,” has become the ideology of the major parties in the developed states of Europe and America.¹⁹

Daniel Bell has also discussed the ideological implications of the “end of chiliastic hopes, to millenarianism, to apocalyptic thinking”—what he means by ideology in his use of the famous phrase. And unlike a number of others who have espoused their versions of the notion, Bell saw the “end of ideology” in politics as making realistic discussions of utopia possible for the first time.

The end of ideology is not—should not be the end of utopia as well. If anything, one can begin anew the discussion of utopia only by being aware of the trap of ideology.²⁰

IT SHOULD BE CLEAR from the references to some of Bell’s and my own writing in the same works in which we discussed the “end” or “decline” of ideology, that neither we nor most of the others who wrote on the subject ever meant the end of systems of integrated political concepts, of utopian thinking, of class conflict

with the related correlates of political positions espoused by the representatives of different classes or other political interest groups. Rather, what we were referring to was a judgment that the passionate attachments of an integrated revolutionary set of doctrines to the anti-system struggles of working-class movements—and the consequent coherent counter-revolutionary doctrines of some of their opponents—were declining, that they were, in C. Wright Mills’ terms, “a legacy from Victorian Marxism.” They would not re-merge in advanced industrial or “post-industrial societies,” although they would continue to exist in the less developed societies, whose social structures and processes of change resembled those of Europe during the Industrial Revolution. Ideology is not the common-sense term, meaning *any* kind of political thinking, that some of our radical critics seem to think it is. One radical sociologist, Franz Schurmann, has effectively pointed out that, from a Marxist point of view, the concept of a revolutionary ideology is meaningless.

Ideology is a tricky word. For Marx, ideology was false consciousness. . . .

In the 1930s, writers applied the word ideology to the belief systems of Fascism, and in the Cold War to those of Communism. The thrust of this usage was clear: Fascist and Communist ideologies are false consciousness. . . . Thus, asking for the “ideology” of the modern revolutionaries is like the Cold War scholars looking for the “operational code” of the Communists.²¹

And Schurmann goes on to ask (in terms reminiscent of Bell’s earlier discussion of the consequences of post-industrial society on political thinking) whether “in this ‘end of ideology,’ are there the seeds of a new moral-political order?”

MUCH OF THE DEBATE concerning the concept of the end of ideology has obviously involved ideological differences. Yet the idea in its modern format was advanced as an empirical hypothesis about the consequences of social development on the character of class-related partisan controversy by a number of sociologists and historians. For the most part, the radical critics have ignored the issue of the validity of the hypothesis; they usually have taken its falseness as *prima facie*, as self-evident—given the fact that political passions and radical protest movements continue to exist. But while some have engaged in polemics, a few others have attempted indeed to evaluate the validity of the proposition. A considerable literature, some of it quantitative in methodology, has sought to compare the intensity of ideological cleavages among different societies, or to examine the changes within nations over time.

¹⁸ Rousseas and Farganis, in *The New Sociology*, pp. 271–274.

¹⁹ S. M. Lipset, “The Changing Class Structure and Contemporary European Politics”, *Daedalus*, 93 (Winter 1964), p. 298. This article has been reprinted in slightly revised form in S. M. Lipset, *Revolution and Counterrevolution*.

²⁰ Bell, *End of Ideology*, p. 405.

²¹ Franz Schurmann, “System, Contradictions, and Revolutions in America,” in Roderick Ayn and Norman Miller (eds.), *The New American Revolution* (1971), p. 61.

Three political scientists (Rejai, Mason, and Beller, not previously involved in the controversy) have examined these studies, and they have concluded that the hypothesis holds up.

The end-of-ideology hypothesis, then, has occasioned a large body of scholarly output over the past decade. In general terms, this hypothesis seeks to establish a negative correlation between the degree of economic development and the intensity of ideological politics within a given country. The hypothesis has held up quite well in empirical investigations in a number of advanced industrial societies.

The differences in evaluation of the thesis—between those who have carefully sought to test it, and that of the polemical critics—led Rejai and his colleagues to look for an explanation of how men could reach such disparate conclusions. They found it in the fact that most of the critics demonstrate an “apparent willingness to disregard the empirical significance of the hypothesis in question and to rely, instead, on semantic justification.” The critics are able to challenge it “by adopting definitions of ideology that have serious deficiencies . . . [that are] so vague, so general, and so broad as to minimize their relevance for empirical investigation.”²²

It should be clear also that the revival of total ideologies among a segment of intellectuals and students in various Western countries does not, in and of itself, disprove the theses advanced by those who wrote of the decline of ideology among mass-based social movements in Western countries. As I noted earlier, many of these writings explicitly exempted intellectuals from the generalisation. More importantly, as a quantitative study of electoral patterns in “Western party systems since 1945” by the Strathclyde political scientists,

Richard Rose and Derek Urwin, indicates, there has been little change in the relative strength of the political parties, whose behaviour has corresponded to Weber’s anticipations.

Whatever index of change is used—a measure of trends or of several measures of fluctuations—the picture is the same: the electoral strength of most parties in Western nations since the War has changed very little from election to election, from decade to decade, or within the lifespan of a generation. . . . In short, the first priority of social scientists concerned with the development of parties and party systems since 1945 is to explain the absence of change in a far from static period in political history.²³

Efforts to find a mass base for so-called New Left groups which reject the established Social-Democratic, Communist, and Democratic parties, all oriented to the electoral system, have failed dramatically in areas as diverse as France, Germany, Italy, Northern Europe, and the United States. Most recently, the vast majority of American New Leftists, including some of their most prominent spokesmen, have rejoined the Democratic party in the United States, finding sufficient ideological sustenance in the liberal and populist positions of George McGovern.

The empirical content subsumed in the concept of the “end of ideology” has commended itself to scholars of sharply different political persuasions. Nevertheless, some of those who have enunciated it have been selectively singled out as supposedly having denied that the sharp type of ideological controversy which emerged in the 1960s could ever occur. This attack illustrates the extent to which ideological evaluations of underlying motives have been confused with validity. Professor Richard Simpson noted recently the increase in such forms of criticism in sociology and warned:

A central idea . . . is that when we pin an ideological tag on a theory . . . we say something about the validity of the theory. This notion is alarming, for it would turn sociology into sub-standard moral philosophy with the resonating of sentiments replacing reason and observation as the basis for constructing and judging theories.²⁴

²² M. Rejai, W. L. Mason, and D. C. Beller, “Empirical Relevance of the Hypothesis of Decline,” in M. Rejai, *Decline of Ideology*, pp. 274–275.

²³ Richard Rose and Derek W. Urwin, “Persistence and Change in Western Party Systems Since 1945,” *Political Studies*, vol. 18 (September 1970), p. 295.

²⁴ Richard Simpson, “System and Humanism in Social Science,” *Science*, vol. 173 (May 1971), p. 664.

Three Poems

The Toreador

It was after the Fiesta Mayor de Barcelona
that Conchita received her "matador",
and placed him on the mantelpiece
amidst a fine collection of Iberian art.

She had snatched him from a life of starvation,
dressed him in a traje de luz,
and presented him as a novillero.

But Fernando Perez graduated to a toreador
and aficionados throughout Spain argued
about his skill and courage at the moment of
truth.
Some likened him to El Vitti, others to Paco
Camino,
while a few veterans said he resembled Belmonte.

But it was the same aficionados who hissed
en la Plaza Monumental,
when Perez hesitated
and suffered a fatal cogida.

That same afternoon
Conchita took Fernando Perez
from her mantelpiece,
and threw him into the fire.
Then went to the calle Escudillers
and drank with the aficionados.

Keith N. G. Bradley

Clouds

So many poems about clouds.
Still. Tonight, driving around
in the mountains, within a huge blue
gap, there was a pack of tiny
golden clouds; some were almost
letters, a T, an almost-epsilon,
an O (as if some smoke-ring puffer
had, at last, really made it).

My ancestors were message hunters,
and though their alphabet is dark
to me, and I believe in next
to nothing they believed in, I
can use an unexpected message.
(There's been no mail at all out here.)
For seconds then, I pressed
that cirric alphabet like
a scholar with some new papyrus.

Richard Stern

Things to buy

"Things to buy," "to buy,"
The little placards cry:
Shamrocks, brooches, rings,
The cottage and the wheel,
Traditional this and that.
Poor selling value,
The woman in men's shoes
Nearly bent double
Getting a few herrings;
The dog seen everywhere
Fouling the pavement,—
Most un-Irish save
The flesh torn at its neck.

James Cole

Three Poems by Marin Sorescu

Passport

To cross the border
Between the sunflower
And the moonflower
Between the alphabet
Of handwritten events
And printed events.

To be friend of all atoms
Which form the light
To sing with the atoms which sing
To cry
With the atoms which die
To enter into all the days of one's life
Without restriction
No matter whether they fall on one side or the other
Of the word
Earth.

This passport
Is written in my bones
On my skull, femur, phalanges and spine
All arranged in a way
To make clear
My right to be man.

Translation

I was sitting an exam
In a dead language
And I had to translate myself
From man into ape.

I played it cool,
First translating a text
From a forest.

But the translation got harder
As I drew nearer to myself.
With some effort
I found, however, satisfactory equivalents
For nails and the hair on the feet.

Around the knees
I started to stammer.
Towards the heart my hand began to shake
And blotted the paper with light.

Still, I tried to patch it up
With the hair of the chest,
But utterly failed
At the soul.

Menu

For breakfast a thin buttered slice
Of life.
With it we take water which rises incessantly
(Last night it covered three-quarters of the globe)
And boil it sterile of microbes.

For lunch we eat well and substantially—
Three courses of earth:
Black earth, loess and clay.

We don't usually have a cooked dinner.
We take
Either a star with a bit of honey
Or if it isn't finished
Some happiness (which in fact we keep
For Sundays)
And whatever else is left over.

*translated from the Romanian by
Constantin Roman and T. J. L. Cribb*

Melvin J. Lasky

The English Ideology

"Ancient institutions and modern improvements, I suppose, Mr. Tadpole?"

"Ameliorations is the better word; ameliorations. Nobody knows exactly what it means."

BENJAMIN DISRAELI, *Coningsby, or the New Generation* (1844)

"... The duty of governments is to be first of all practical. I am for makeshifts and expediency. I would like to make the people who live on this world at the same time as I do better fed and happier generally. If incidentally I benefit posterity—so much the better—but I would not sacrifice my own generation to a principle however high or a truth however great."

WINSTON S. CHURCHILL (1896)

"Our alternating Cabinets, though belonging to different Parties, have never differed about the foundations of society. And it is evident that our whole political machinery presupposes a people so fundamentally at one that they can safely afford to bicker; and so sure of their own moderation that they are not dangerously disturbed by the never-ending din of political conflict. May it always be so."

A. J. BALFOUR (1928)

1. The Popular Cause

ONE OF THE ESSENTIAL pre-conditions of the establishment or, in some cases, the re-activation of a revolutionary tradition and its associated components of utopian hope and militant temper, is the creation of "The People" as a political factor. Its capitalisation bears witness to a large and dramatic discovery of elemental social forces, to a moral and emotional alliance with a grand and ultimately decisive abstraction; indeed the fraternity with virtuous and heroic masses, downtrodden for so long but now at last awake to a giant's strength, has obvious physical and metaphysical attractions. As Sir George Savile pointed out to a handful of radical friends, when the English mind was on the

eve of one of its rare but grandiose flirtations with Utopia and Revolution:

In the present acceptance of the term People, it may be hard to define; but, if they are pleased to apply their hands to the work, *the People* will not be an abstract or metaphysical idea.¹

Such work as was not purely literary or ideological had always to do with the grubby realities of reform. Desperate issues—political evils, social distortions, economic malpractices—were long at hand; although, as Sir George Savile again pointed out in the early 1780s with an apt metaphor, it was of little use to be thrusting with poles till the tide should begin to flow again and lift the grounded ship of its own accord. English feelings ran strong on the subject of the corrupt system of parliamentary representation, on the restrictions of tolerance for Catholics and Dissenters, on the immoralities of slave trading. Only yesterday men had rejoiced in the establishment of a free society, with unprecedented liberties and privileges. Now, all too clearly, the liberties seemed partial and the privileges restricted; and the whole framework of freedom appeared as yet unfinished social construction. Each political generation rediscovers, with a mixture of rage and betrayal, this sense of failure and shortcoming, and re-lives the onset of a conscience-stricken dedication to new and final tasks.

The English generation with which we will be mainly concerned in these pages appeared to be doubly blessed: the dawn of 1776 became the high noon of 1789, as promise moved dramatically to fulfilment. In April of 1776 Dr Richard Price was anything but optimistic:

... nor have I much hope that any great reformation will take place in this country until some calamity comes that shall make us feel more, and awaken us more to reflection.²

Some men, then, would wait for Price's calamity or for Savile's buoyant tide; the coming of great, dramatic, earnest and even desperate events would determine the time-table of reformation. Others, according to principle or predisposition,

¹ P. A. Brown, *The French Revolution in English History* (1918; 1965), pp. 15–6. See, generally: Edward Dowden, *The French Revolution and English Literature* (1897); Allene Gregory, *The French Revolution and the English Novel* (1915; 1966); A. E. Hancock, *The French Revolution and the English Poets* (1899).

² *Life and Correspondence of Major Cartwright* (ed. F. D. Cartwright, 1826), vol. I, p. 95.

preferred voluntarism to determinism. Who would deny that mankind could shape its own destiny? Human will, fired by the intensity of moral ideals, could alter the course of history and mould society closer to the heart's desire. It is an ancient alternative, this central cross road of the passive and the active, between the path of those who decide to wait confidently and those who choose to do desperately.

In this first great century of modern revolutions there is an additional element, namely the emergence of a new type of radical, a revolutionary personality, a complex hybrid of prophet, Prometheus, and politico. In England in these years his profile was best sketched by Major John Cartwright. He intended it as "a general answer to those who endeavour to discourage all great attempts against the current of public vices and fashionable habits." The injunction was to turn away from fashion and to have no fear of resisting the current. The conformist doctrine of "swim with the stream" he considered vicious and dissipated. He would stand alone not merely because he could do no other, but also because, standing there, even in his loneliness, he might well be at exactly the point at which to move the world! After all, it happened before to heroes of great reformations. "Luther, in his day, was treated as a visionary, a washer of blackamoors white, a madman; but it is to Luther we owe our religious liberty..." In the lean years of political frustration "those who act on right principles" need have no cause to despair.

Seeing themselves neglected or ridiculed, finding themselves foiled in all their attempts, and feeling the sacrifices they make to their duty, they are yet happy in themselves; they enjoy the tranquillity within, and they taste the supreme of all earthly delights, the love and esteem of the virtuous.³

And at the first sign of a change in the historic current it would no longer be a matter of the happy, tranquil few, lonely in their virtuousness. There was, after all, a more supreme political delight than the passive, patient saintliness of the reformer in isolation: namely, the visionary of right principles being finally given the historic opportunity to participate in the popular struggle

for the cause of liberty. The People were only waiting for leadership.

Yet timing was all. As Christopher Wyvill explained, "they will wait in silent expectation till the altered sentiments of their fellow-citizens shall have rendered it expedient... to renew the struggle to destroy the System..." Recalling the dour decades of the 1770s and '80s, he underscored that "it would have been disadvantageous to the cause of Liberty to have wearied the friends of political Reformation with hopeless exertions. It was evident that the nation, at that time, was not ripe for Reformation..." Finally, writing in April 1792,⁴ he now beheld "with pleasure the increasing zeal of our countrymen in the cause of Reformation..."

No, the lines were being drawn for a political struggle which took on inevitably, as the flights of rhetoric took wing, the absolutised battle formations of ancient, sacred and mythical contests. Dr Richard Price warned the despots: "You cannot hold the world in darkness..." and he rallied his friends with the grand spectacle of peoples "starting from sleep, breaking their fetters, and claiming justice from their oppressors..."⁵ A piece of universal salvation had been staked out, and the vision was as individual as the political commitment was personal.

WHEN THE BASTILLE FELL, Horace Walpole made haste to send his congratulations to Hannah More as if she and her friends were the stormers from the Invalides themselves: "I congratulate you on the demolition of the Bastille... I always hated to drive by it, knowing the miseries it contained." But this was about as far as an old-fashioned English spirit would go; the conventional wisdom of his own strong-minded political tradition led him on to a certain distant, sceptical coolness:

The destruction of it was silly, and agreeable to the ideas of a mob, who do not know stones and bars and bolts from a *lettre de cachet*... If despotism recovers, the Bastille will rise from its ashes—recover, I fear, it will. The *Etats* cannot remain a mob of kings, and will prefer a single one to a larger mob of kings and greater tyrants. The nobility, the clergy, and people of property will wait, till by address and money they can divide the people; or, whoever gets the larger or more victorious army into his hands will be a Cromwell or a Monk. In short, a revolution procured by a national vertigo does not promise a crop of legislators. It is time that composes a good constitution: it formed ours... The Revolution was temperate, and has lasted; and, though it might have been improved, we know that with all its moderation it disgusted half the nation who would have brought back the old sores.⁶

³ *Life and Correspondence of Cartwright*, vol. I, p. 102.

⁴ Christopher Wyvill, *A Defence of Dr. Price and the Reformers of England* (1792), pp. iv–vi.

⁵ Brown, *French Revolution in English History*, p. 31.

⁶ Walpole to Hannah More (September 1789), in *The Letters of Horace Walpole* (ed. Toynbee, 1905), vol. XIV, p. 208.

Nothing could be more characteristic of the gulf between the temperaments than this attitude towards the harsh futilities of violent power struggles, as against the advantage of temperate change based on a constitution of improved legislation. But, as once before, the men of moderated calm underestimated the force of heat and passion in excited times: the infectiousness of *enthusiasm*.

Let not the word be condemned [Major Cartwright wrote to Wyvill]. You, my dear Sir, are an enthusiast; without enthusiasm, who ever excelled? Who ever became illustrious by great achievements, without this heavenly spark? Who ever toiled in the cause of truth or virtue or public freedom?

Enthusiasm is the ardent spirit in the composition of the mind, without which it neither resists corruption, nor is influenced by a genuine love of liberty.⁷

It followed, therefore, that the very first task of the new movement of reform was, in a phrase of one of the radical reformers, "not to prevail with the deputies but to animate the people." There was a growing sense that change was not really possible through the normal channels of protest and legislative amendment: an extra-parliamentary force was needed.

I am persuaded [John Jebb said] that a reform, when effected, must take place in consequence of the active energy of the people. . . .⁸

Such an appeal to new resources of heart and mind—energy, animation, anger, conscience, steadfastness, principle—always endangers the emotional configuration which had triumphed after the subsiding of the last historic outburst of storm and impatience. Once again, the hard-won virtues of yesterday became encrusted vices. Prudence paled, as the spirit of compromise—once felt to be the guarantor of all the basic political and social achievements of a peaceful post-revolutionary England—became a vile and shameful thing, held in contempt by all men who would fight for the People's truest interests. These new organ-tones emerged ever more vigorously in the circles of the various English clubs which grew up in the 1780s—the Constitutional Society and the Revolution Society, above all. Major John Cartwright—who had magnificently ruined his prospects by refusing to serve in the military repression of the American

Revolution, and who has been called "the pure essence of Radical spirit as it existed on the eve of the French Revolution"—is the author of the classic formulation of this mood: "*Moderation in principle is criminal*." John Jebb was not far behind in succinctness, when he and his Radical friends were pressed to make concessions: "*In my opinion, the spirit of accommodation will ruin all*." Years later Cartwright recalled: "As my old friend John Jebb used to say, '*Don't tell me of a moderate man, he is always a rascal*'. . . ."⁹

Between 1776 and 1789 certain philosophical absolutes, enunciated with passion and sincerity (although with a consistency which only a later generation would, in turn, find tinged with hypocrisy), served to create a deep ideological gap between what was and what ought to be. If all men were created equal, who would dare to be a moderator between freedom and enslavement? And if tolerance was (or, at least, should be) a pure and total virtue, then who could accommodate himself to restrictions, proscriptions, and censors?

NOR WAS ENTHUSIASM the only word that had now to be rescued from the vocabulary of the condemned. The very idea of revolution was to be revived, and indeed the old glorious word itself had to take on a new lease of life. Let us then, pleaded Sir Brooke Boothby in 1790,

teach it diligently to our children, let us talk of it when we sit in our houses, and we walk by the way; when we lie down and when we rise up; let us bind it for a sign upon our hands and as a frontlet between our eyes; let us write it upon the posts of our house and on our gates.

For Boothby here (in another thundering pamphlet replying to Burke) was trying to take up the challenge to think through the "theory" of revolutionary change. As he put it to Burke directly, "You have made it necessary for us *now* to examine when and how, under what pressure of evil and under what sanction of right, a revolution may ever again at any future period be recurred to in this country." If, presumably, it was to be an English revolution, then certain special distinctions had to be made. "In the loose analogies of declamation," Boothby warned, "it is not difficult to confound revolution with rebellion, reformation with irreligion, resistance with revolt. . . . they have all some features in common, and by presenting the resemblance and artfully concealing the difference might in the jumble be mistaken for each other. . . ."¹⁰ In fact, in one of his many decla-

⁷ *Life and Correspondence of Cartwright*, vol. I, pp. 296-7.

⁸ Brown, *The French Revolution in History*, p. 19.

⁹ Cartwright, *Life and Correspondence* (1826), vol. I, p. 352. Brown, pp. 17, 25-6 (italics added).

¹⁰ Sir Brooke Boothby, *A Letter to Edmund Burke* (1791), pp. 102-3, 77, 57.

matory moods Dr Priestley had resolved the matter too facilely.

... every successful revolt is termed a revolution, and every unsuccessful one a rebellion.¹¹

How, then, to be successful? What would be the most "propitious conjuncture" for a "strong effort in favour of liberty"? Boothby wrote:

The people as I have observed before must feel the actual pressure of the evil and feel it pretty strongly too before they can be made to move. They will not hazard present good for contingent advantage; and in this I think their gross good sense directs them perfectly well; for premature resistance instead of serving the cause of liberty, has generally ended in most effectually playing the game into the hands of power. . . . I would endeavour to provide for the future by turning the thoughts and attention of men to the past; the GLORIOUS REVOLUTION should be perpetually recalled to their remembrance, and the immortal decree of the Convention Parliament continually impressed upon their minds. . . . If this is the object of the Revolution Society . . . I should be proud to see my humble name upon its rolls.

For the moment, accordingly, until the popular forces were in motion and the conjuncture of events propitious, the enthusiasts were necessarily confined to words, not deeds; but there was a power of hope in that great "word of fear."

Revolution should resound through the palaces of Kings and the levee-rooms of Ministers. Far from endeavouring to hide—

*"This word of fear,
Unpleasing to a royal ear,"*

in the tawdry rags of sophistry, I would present it to them in large and legible characters, that he that runneth might read. I would write it upon the wall at the feast of Balshazzar; I would force them to look up to it, like the "bow in the cloud, as the token of a covenant for perpetual generations."

For Brooke Boothby, in a moment of a propagandist's inspiration, here was the great watchword of the day, to be broadcast to friends and enemies alike:

... I would find them where they lay asleep and hollow in their ear REVOLUTION.¹²

Indeed, the "friends of the Great and Glorious Revolution of 1688" who had established themselves as a Revolution Society to commemorate a centenary found less antiquarian work on their hands in the very first year. The French events of 1789 proved the renewed relevance of their "Revolution Principles." They were elated by

"the glorious success of the French Revolution", and they hastened to express their "ardent wishes that the influence of so glorious an example may be felt by all Mankind, until Tyranny and Despotism shall be swept from the face of the globe, and Universal Liberty and Happiness prevail. . . ." All reformers appeared to be revolutionaries now, and as "Men, Britons, and Citizens of the World" they cheered a new revolution which was (in Lord Stanhope's words)

... to introduce a general reformation in the governments of Europe, and to make the World free and happy.

The messages which were exchanged between the Revolution Society in London and the National Assembly in Paris intensified cross-Channel emotions and enhanced the poetical prose.

Pourquoi craindrions-nous de l'avouer, Messieurs, la Révolution qui s'opère aujourd'hui dans notre patrie, est due surtout à l'exemple que l'Angleterre nous a donné depuis un siècle? . . . Tandis que de toutes parts, les tyrans s'efforçaient d'éteindre le feu sacré de la Liberté, nos voisins veillaient avec un soin courageux, à l'entretenir toujours dans leurs sein. Nous en avons recueilli des étincelles bienfaisantes; et ce feu embrasant toutes les âmes, va, dans l'Europe entière, réduire pour jamais en cendres les liens dont le despotisme accablait les Nations.

Why should we be ashamed, Gentlemen [in the official translation made by the Revolution Society in London], to acknowledge that the Revolution which is now establishing itself in our country, is owing to the example given by England a century ago? . . . Whilst on all sides Tyrants were attempting to extinguish the sacred flame of Liberty, our Neighbours with intrepid watchfulness and care cherished it in their bosoms. We have caught some of these salutary sparks; and this fire, enflaming every mind, is extending itself over all Europe, for ever to reduce to ashes those shackles with which Despotism has oppressed mankind.¹³

Both the English spirit and the French pen seemed to be at one.

2. Elements of the Special Tone

LOOKING BACK on such heroic times as only enthusiasm can suffuse and vivify, one tends to a note of mournfulness about the lost unity of public and private affairs. One comes sorely to miss, when revolutionaries weary and revolutions fail, or fail to take place, "the feverish excitement of public emotion" (in the phrase of Lamartine, the poet of romantic politics). Coleridge's daughter, Sara, once recalled "how gravely and earnestly used Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Wordsworth, and my Uncle Southey also, to discuss the affairs of the nation, as if it

¹¹ Dr. Joseph Priestley, *Letters to Edmund Burke* (1791), p. vii.

¹² Boothby, *A Letter*, pp. 101-4.

¹³ *The Correspondence of the Revolution Society in London, with the National Assembly, and with various Societies of the Friends of Liberty in France and England* (1792), pp. 1-3, 12-15.

all came home to their business and bosoms, as if it were their private concern!" But now, she had to concede: "Men do not canvass these matters now-days, I think, quite in the same tone. . . ."

We are dealing here with the public ideas and private passions of an English generation with a special tone, and one which appears—at least on first reading—to be tinged with all the special characteristics of revolutionary ideology. It was a "triple forg'd" ideology, and that sensitive ideologue, Dr Richard Price, felt it most personally. "After sharing in the benefits of one Revolution, I have been spared to be a witness to two other Revolutions, both glorious." The "bliss" and "very Heaven" that Wordsworth experienced was matched by an intellectual joy at the prospect—in words to be found in one of the first numbers of the newly-published *Analytical Review* (its enthusiastic editor just back from revolutionary Paris)—of "advancing to a great era in the history of human affairs."¹⁴

We can, conveniently, make a compact summary of the essential ingredients of the special tone by quoting from an address made in 1790 by one of the enthusiasts of the day.¹⁵

1. The Doom of an Established System. "All the power and policy of man cannot continue a system long after its truth has ceased to be acknowledged, or an establishment long after it has ceased to contribute to utility. It is equally vain as to expect to preserve a tree whose roots are cut away. It may look as green and flourishing as before for a short time; but its sentence is passed, its principle of life is gone, and death is already within it. . . ."

2. The Force of Nature. "We appeal to the certain, sure operation of increasing light and knowledge, which it is no more in your power to stop, than to repel the tide with your naked hand, or to wither with your breath the genial influence of vegetation. . . ."

3. The Sudden Flash of the Times. "The spread of that light is in general gradual and imperceptible; but there are periods when its progress is accelerated, when it seems with a sudden flash to open the firmament, and pour in day at once. Can

ye not discern the signs of the times? The minds of men are in movement. . . . The genius of Philosophy is walking abroad, and with the touch of Ithuriel's spear is trying the establishments of the earth."

4. The Destructive Element. "Whatever is loose must be shaken, whatever is corrupted must be lopt away; whatever is not built on the broad basis of public utility, must be thrown to the ground. . . . Obscure murmurs gather, and swell into a tempest. . . ."

5. The Unity of Theory & Practice. "Man, as man, becomes an object of respect. Tenets are transferred from theory to practice. The glowing sentiment and the lofty speculation no longer serve 'but to adorn the pages of a book'; they are brought home to men's business and bosoms; and, what some centuries ago it was daring but to think, and dangerous to express, is now realised, and carried into effect. . . ."

6. A System of Principle. "Systems are analysed into their first principles and principles are fairly pursued to their legitimate consequences."

7. The Hour of Natural Birth. "The enemies of reformation, who palliate what they cannot defend, and defer what they dare not refuse; who, with Festus, put off to a more convenient season what, only because it is the present season is inconvenient, stand aghast; and find they have no power to put back the important hour, when nature is labouring with the birth of great events. Can ye not discern?—But you do discern these signs; you discern them well, and your alarm is apparent. You see a mighty empire breaking from bondage, and exerting the energies of recovered freedoms. . . ."

THE CAREFUL STUDENT of comparative ideology will perhaps be aware of the incompleteness of this new English version of the "triple forg'd" revolutionary consciousness. Where is the Cromwellian sense of an insurrectionary rising, the American sense of the just struggle, the French sense of perfection? But these too can be found, if not in great or coherent formulations, then sometimes in satirical and farcical texts.

8. The Cry for Perfect Government. "JACK: What paper have you got there? What dost look so glum for? TOM (*looking on the paper*): Cause enough. Why, the news here tells me that I am very unhappy, and very miserable, which I never should have known hadn't I the luck to light on this paper? JACK: What is the matter? TOM:

¹⁴ Frank Hamel, *A Woman of the Revolution* (1912), p. 312. *The Debate on the French Revolution* (ed. Cobban, 1950), pp. 42, 64, 55.

¹⁵ Anna Laetitia Barbauld, *Works* (ed. Lucy Aikin, 1825), vol. II, pp. 355–77; *The Debate on the French Revolution*, pp. 49–50.

Matter? Why, I want liberty. . . . I want a *general* reform. JACK: I'll tell you a story.

When our Squire married his lady, who is out of the way fine and likes to do everything like the French, she begged him to pull down the old house, and build it up in her frippery way. "What!" says the Squire, "shall I pull down this fine old house, which has stood firm these many years,—this house in which my fathers have lived comfortable for ages past,—this house too, which has weathered many a stormy war, and only underwent a little needful repair in the Revolution that took place years ago,—this house too, which all my neighbours take pattern by, shall I pull it all down, because may be, there's a bad passage here, and a dark closet there, and an awkward room or two in it? Our forefathers took time for what they did. They understood foundation-work; none of your lath-and-plaster buildings, which are up in a day and down in a night, for me!" My lady mumped and grumbled, but the old house was let stand, and a glorious one it is; though there may be a little fault or two in it, and though a few decays want stopping; so now and then they mend a little thing, and they'll go on mending, I dare say, as they have leisure to the end of the chapter, if they are but let alone. But no pull-me-down works.

JACK: What is it you are crying out for, Tom?
TOM: Why for a perfect government. . . ."¹⁶

It is rather more difficult to find the ingredient of Blood, and the blood-thirsty element in the following London placard is all-too-obviously qualified by the wit in the ink. It announces at the Federation Theater, in Equality Square, a new and entertaining Farce, called *La Guillotine, or George's Head in the Basket*. Among the cast are: "Banditti, Assassins, Cut Throats, and Wholesale Dealers in Blood, by the Empress of Ruffians, the Emperor of Harm-Any, Thing of Prussia, Prince of S. Cash-Hell, &c." When this was produced by the Government as evidence in one of the great State Trials of 1794, it was angrily challenged by Thomas Erskine (defence counsel in the trials of Tom Paine and John Horne Tooke) as being "fabricated by the spies who support the prosecution. . . ."

More serious and more authentic was a militant sense of outrage and anger that was abroad in the land. However, as I have already suggested, moods of high complacency and deep dissatisfaction take turns in historic succession, and in opposing camps. They can be usually found co-existing as in some simultaneous performance of *Prometheus Bound* and *Unbound*. Thus, it was perfectly in character for Lord Justice Braxfield, in good voice and eloquence, to address the jury with this version of the state of the nation (and it

required, as he candidly said, "no proof"):

. . . the British constitution is the best in the world;—for the truth of this, gentlemen, I need only appeal to your own feelings. Is not every man secure in his life, liberty, and property? Is not happiness in the power of every man, except those perhaps, who, from disappointment in their schemes of advancement are discontented? Does not every man enjoy unmolested the fruits of his industry? And does not every man sit safely under his own vine and his own fig-tree, and none shall make him afraid? . . .

Of this same time in the same land, in roughly the same year, came an anonymous "Address to the Poor" (it figured in another State Trial of 1794) which, in its contrasting colour and comment, rivals the contradictory 17th-century depositions of Nehemiah and John Rogers which I have previously cited. One sees only the good, happily achieved, the other sees only the evil, painfully endured.

Social conditions become transformed over centuries, and although the real terms of both prosperity and poverty, of individual well-being and misery, take on new and different levels—there would be no social and economic history to record, were it otherwise—the recorder of ideologies seems only to be able to register an important element of literary constancy, an almost static psychological component. The ration of hypocrisy and of self-pity may well be fixed for men and classes in organised society; and although the piteous cry must always command more human sympathy and attention than the complacent boast, neither the voice of gloom or doom nor the voice of the turtle is a reliable guide to the historical truth of things. But the witness must be heard:

Great God! What spectacle so affecting to a reflecting mind as Great Britain in her present state! On the one hand, we see the impudent nobles advertising their "*Grand Dinners*," in the very face of the hungry poor, whom they have ruined!! On the other hand, widows, orphans, and others are weeping, and often dying for want of bread! What can be more odious in the sight of heaven, than feast and famine in the same nation? Yet this is literally the case in this kingdom, at this moment, and not only in the nation, but in every town, in every street, yea, often under the very same roof!

Open your eyes, O ye poor of the land!—in vain are your hands and your mouths open! Do you not see how you are cajoled and degraded, by the paltry subscriptions made for you, at different times and in various parts of the nation; which serve only to make your slavery more servile, and your misery of longer duration? . . . Ye poor, take a further look into your rights, and you will see, that, upon the principles of reason and justice, every peaceable and useful person has a right, yea, a "*Divine Right*" to be satisfied with the good of the land!

¹⁶ *The Debate on the French Revolution*, pp. 281–2. Narrated by Hannah More in her *Modern Politicians, a Word to The Working Classes of Great Britain*.

For Lord Justice Braxfield this was only another "grumbletonian", seeking to bring about reforms "by force of arms" and taking the country to "the very brink of destruction." The fact that there were indeed such "grumbletonians", hovering between bouts of anger and despair and visions of a new and better world, was almost coincidental to the mechanical certainties of an arrogant noble to whom sedition was always an infernal mixture of faith and folly. He knew what the puritans of demagoguery were up to, whether they were up to it or not; and, as it happened, a few were. As the "Friend to the Poor" concluded his address, and it offers a ninth ingredient of the special tone we are examining:

9. Beyond Oppression to Peace & Plenty. "Hearken! O ye poor of the land! . . . Awake! Arise! arm yourselves—with truth, justice and reason—lay siege to corruption; and your unity and invincibility shall teach your oppressors terrible things! Purge the Representation of your Country. . . . choose a representative . . . from among the lower order of men, and he will know how to sympathise with you, and represent you in character. Then, and not till then, shall you experience universal Peace and incessant Plenty."

At a general meeting of the London Corresponding Society, held at the Globe Tavern in the Strand, in the same month of January 1794, an Address was read and agreed to which provides us with a final ingredient. For there can be no making of a revolutionary ideology without the daring thesis that extra-legal insurgency is justified, without the brute confidence that the rising of just and desperate men is entitled to fashion a law unto themselves.

10. Our Law & Theirs. ". . . it is both our duty and our interest to stand and fall together. . . . We must now choose at once either liberty or slavery for ourselves and our posterity. . . . You may ask perhaps, by what means shall we seek redress? We answer, that men in a state of civilised society are bound to seek redress of the grievances from the laws; as long as any redress can be obtained by the laws. But our common Master whom we serve (whose law is a law of liberty, and whose service is perfect freedom)

has taught us not to expect to gather grapes from thorns, nor figs from thistles. We must have redress from our own laws and not from the laws of our plunderers, enemies, and oppressors."¹⁷

3. Enthusiastic Affinities

TO WHAT EXTENT can any of these ardent spirits, all touched by the heavenly spark of enthusiasm, be called revolutionaries? What happens to the various ingredients of the special tone? Most of the essential characteristics, so clear in the crisper air of the Continent, appear to get slowly lost in a peculiar English fog. Language deviates, tone is transformed, and the peculiarities of temperament disrupt apparent unities of political principle. It is one thing to be a radical who is devoted to the fulfilment of some utopian dream: but for the true revolutionary the English reformer, no matter how nobly persistent in his militancy, was never sufficiently logical, thorough, and inflexible. He was never extreme enough, for with the rarest of exceptions he never felt at ease in the largenesses of either theory or rhetoric. In the Puritanism of the 17th century there was the homely comfort of Christian theology and Biblical language, without which such English revolutionaries as flourished could hardly have fully stretched themselves. Both the accents and the framework were substantially different in the 18th century.

When the 18th-century English reformers spoke of revolution, it was with the last lingering echoes of its earlier meaning: a restoration, a return to the fullness and purity of original principles. Old inflections do not disappear easily from the scene. But here old English circularity had to compete directly and dramatically with new French linearity, as a great Revolutionary *coup d'état* announced itself boldly as a forward step of progress to the new and the unprecedented. The English reformers, to the extent that they accepted the foreign vocabulary, necessarily found themselves on strange and different grounds. Words are worlds, and the two political languages were separated by more than a channel, were indeed worlds apart.

No doubt the French revolutionary intellectual had it easier. In the development of the national public mind the powerful elements of reason and dialectic, rhetoric and philosophical abstraction proved to be armaments for one side. The *ancien régime* had never been able to work out a

¹⁷ *A Complete Collection of State Trials* (ed. Howell, 1818), vol. XXV, pp. 640–644. *The Proceedings at large on the trial of John Horne Tooke for High Treason at the Sessions House in the Old Bailey* (ed. Blanchard, 1795), vol. II, pp. 340–343.

system of ideas, an ideological argument, for the defence of its own established interests; in this sense it was taken to be "the stupid party." In England, however, by the time of the French Revolution there were very substantial traditions—ranging from the preoccupation with Anglo-Saxon constitutionality, the post-Cromwellian ideal of moderation, and at least a century of subservience to pragmatic slogans—which necessarily involved the debate of the old and the new in a different atmosphere.

Listen, for example, to the defence of an English radical against charges of being a "Jacobin, Leveller, and perhaps Traitor." Thomas Holcroft was a member of the Society for Constitutional Information, and a friend of William Godwin. After the Government had abandoned the attempt to try him for high treason, he proceeded to castigate the "political superstitions" of the age, arguing "how necessary it is for men to inquire accurately what they mean," for "philosophers themselves have erected many an imaginary being, each as their idol. . . ."¹⁸

Holcroft warned against the dangers of a political language that over-used systematic terms of classification: "abstract words and phrases . . . denoting arrangement and relative ideas, have been personified." What do the superstitions of the raging controversy really mean? It was, for him, all "language as incomprehensible and absolute as its perfections." He would have none of it—the imaginative creation of idols, the absolutisation of the relative, the personification of ideas—and it was a characteristic and symptomatic refusal. As he pleaded, "Only suffer those, who are not thus amused by words, to inquire into facts. . . ."

I make no apology for yet another semantical interruption. An historian does well to pay attention to the uses of words in the course of great events; and this for various reasons, not least being the striking fact that in heightened moments of historic action the actors themselves become very aware of words and their special consequences. This is especially true of

the self-consciousness to which I have called attention among English ideologists from their initial 17th-century concern with the "word of God" and the "Devil's rhetoric" onwards. It is a factor which, we are increasingly persuaded, has had fateful consequences for the vocabulary of revolution. As John Horne Tooke (who had stood with Thomas Holcroft in the dock at the Old Bailey on charges of treasonable subversion) wrote in his remarkable book on language:

F.: Must we always be seeking after the meaning of words?

H.: Of important words we must, if we wish to avoid important error. The meaning of these words especially is of the greatest consequence to mankind; and seems to have been strangely neglected by those who have made the most use of them.¹⁹

A revolutionary, thus handicapped, is hopelessly tongue-tied. The English radical, proud of his linguistics, his maturity, and his common-sensical sobriety, found himself being consistently cut off from those extravagant resources of spontaneity and youthful, if sometimes infantile, energy. "Exert your faculties, Sir; think but a little," Holcroft affirms, "and you will find, that, when we thus amuse ourselves with words, we act like children. . . ." Once deprived of the weapons of phraseology, the English radical found himself helpless before the withering contempt of his equally word-wary opponents. In a speech in the House of Commons, the dramatist Richard Brinsley Sheridan put it strongly: ". . . As to the phrases Convention, Citizen, &c. in which they had affected an imitation of the proceedings of the French, the worst that could be said of them was, that they were contemptibly foolish. . . ." At bottom, the failure of the revolutionary ideology to cross the Channel safely was associated with the inability of the English public mind to make welcome (in a prescient phrase used in a Parliamentary debate in 1790) "the strange mixture of metaphysics with politics, which we are witnessing in the neighbouring country. . . ."²⁰

NO REVOLUTIONARY TEMPERAMENT can thrive without such metaphysics, or without its great sustaining imagery. The natural metaphors—whose emergence in the European imagination I have tried to chronicle—now, in England, appeared to be (except to a handful of romantic poets) unnatural and antipathetic. Radicals, liberals, and reformers alike turned away from the conceits which everywhere else were to remain

¹⁸ Thomas Holcroft, *A Letter to the Rt. Hon. William Windham, on the Intemperance and Dangerous Tendency on his Public Conduct* (1795), pp. 23–7; quoted in *The Debate on the French Revolution*, pp. 325–6.

¹⁹ John Horne Tooke, *Diversions of Purley* (rev. ed., 1829), vol. II, p. 3.

²⁰ *The Debate on the French Revolution*, pp. 324, 106.

the distinctive signs of the revolutionary's metaphorical imperatives. No one put it more succinctly than William Cobbett in a number of his *Political Register*:

We have so often been told about the earthquake, the volcano, the burning lava of the French revolution, that some of us seem, at last, to have taken this figure of speech in its literal meaning. . . .²¹

Would, then, the earth not shake and a great storm come to herald the purifying fire? What would become of a revolutionary faith when it could not draw strength from a sense of being allied to the beneficent course of nature herself, and especially to her catastrophes?

The vision of the English revolution, such as it was, had to make do with more humdrum imaginative materials. "A partial change, no doubt will be preferable," Dr Priestley concedes, "to a total one, if a partial change will be sufficient for the purpose." He only wants it recorded that, under some circumstances, it might conceivably be "more advisable to pull down an old and inconvenient house, and build another from the foundation, rather than lay out money in repairs. . . ." Another defender of revolutionary solutions admits that he wouldn't have objected if Burke had only confined himself to "exposing the hollow and shapeless phantoms existing . . . in the brains of a few senseless enthusiasts." He is also troubled by the dire temptations of corrupting power with which the men of a successful revolution would be confronted: "They have not only the passions and interests of their adverse parties but, what is much more dangerous, their own to contend with. Power is the strongest of all tests of human virtue, an ordeal almost too severe for the infirmity of our nature. . . ." A member of the Revolution Society concedes that Dr Price "had stepped far beyond the line of prudence and propriety." Neither zeal nor eloquence would drive him to consider a revolution as anything but "a last resource." And Mary Wollstonecraft is prepared to go so far as to "allow that Dr Price's zeal may have carried him further than sound reason can justify," that "his political opinions

are Utopian reveries", and that all political revolutions are dangerous "till we can see the remote consequences of things. . . ."²²

LIKE COCTEAU'S MIRROR, the English revolutionary mind was reflecting too much before sending forth its images. The glory of a great change was still attractive, but if it was to be another revolution, then partially, fearful of power, within the proper limits of prudence, without the vagueness of Utopian illusions, with a certain sense of consequences, and then only as a last resort. A hundred years of hardheaded and keen-witted political analysis, from Locke and Halifax to David Hume, had proved to be a stern taskmaster for the English mind. It was as if in the century since the Glorious Revolution it had been thoroughly debriefed.

Looked at very closely the English radicals could not conceivably be taken for Tocqueville's "new race of men" in France—"revolutionaries of a hitherto unknown breed . . . men who carried audacity to the point of sheer insanity; who balked at no innovation and, unchecked by any scruples, acted with an unprecedented ruthlessness. . . ."²³ If they were revolutionaries at all they were a known breed of scrupulous men: sane, circumspect and, ultimately, reluctant. How could the putative promise of an earthquake evoke anything but appalling images of a Lisbon disaster? And what sense could there be, for a sea-faring folk whose genius lay in the discovery of the safest ocean routes, to offer the vaunted oceanic prospect of a great world-shaking storm? The language of the English ideology tended to reflect the temper and the natural conceits of an island people soberly preoccupied with its struggle against the elements. The English gardener wanted to prune; the English mechanic to tinker; the English carpenter to repair. The English merchant liked to bargain and adjust, and the English sailor preferred his charted seas and safe harbours. And the English revolutionary? Driving himself to ruthless lengths of imaginative audacity, he offers only this dry Newtonian conceit on behalf of a cause whose true believers would always be prepared to make supreme sacrifices.

The very regulation of time [Brooke Boothby writes] by which every thing else is regulated has been found subject to error and requiring change. To the Julian has succeeded the Gregorian system, and to that another must succeed if the world should so long endure. Our poor little institutions like our watches require to be periodically wound up and frequently repaired. They all contain in their

²¹ *Political Register*, November 1804, in *Cobbett's Political Works* (ed. Cobbett, 1836), vol. I, p. 483.

²² Joseph Priestley, *Letters to Edmund Burke* (Birmingham, 1791), p. 3; Sir Brooke Boothby, *A Letter to Edmund Burke* (1791), pp. 37, 76; Anon., *A Letter to Edmund Burke, in Reply* (London, 1790), p. 2; Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Men* (1790), pp. 33-4.

²³ Alexis de Tocqueville, *The Old Régime and the French Revolution* (tr. Gilbert, 1955), p. 157.

very essence and original concoction latent principles of destruction. It is the best office of the collective wisdom of the times to mark the decay and to retard its progress, and when the day comes, as come it must sooner or later, that the machine ceases entirely to answer the purposes for which it was constructed, to direct the formation of a new one if possible on a better principle and of more durable materials.²⁴

A time-bomb, rather than a time-pie, might have been a more relevant offering to a new race of audacious men.

IF THE CALLING OF REVOLUTION figured at all in the radical reform movement it did so as a matter of what almost all of its proponents felt to be practical politics. So far from being an apocalypse and a path to paradise, it was a fateful and ruinous event that had best be avoided; and it could only be avoided by powerful concessions to the powerless. Revolution, or the threat thereof, was a political stratagem, calculated to instil fear or uncertainty or, in any event, a sufficient readiness in the ruling establishments to give as a desperate alternative what they had not been prepared to give in argument and persuasion. It was an obvious ploy and hence a favoured one; and there were few, if any, among all the Christian theologians enlisted in the cause who felt qualms about this new form of making evil (and they held it to be such) their good. But the trouble with blackmail is that, if the bluff should fail, one may be forced to assume a role for which one was essentially unprepared. Beyond the first opening rounds of threat and counter-bluff lay consequences whose repugnance could not be quite justified by their uncontrollability or assumed inevitability.

The English reformers were not the revolutionaries they appeared to be pretending to be. Neither their ideas nor their emotions—I have already indicated that their language and their temperaments imposed similar limitations—could be fully extended to cover a revolutionary mission. To the extent that, for a brief historical moment, they sounded or even behaved as if they were anything but meliorists, additional pressures were placed on an already unstable ideological personality to render it even more contradictory, untenable, and transitory.

²⁴ Sir Brooke Boothby, *A Letter to Edmund Burke* (1791), pp. 78–9.

²⁵ Christopher Hobhouse, *Fox* (1934; ed. Nicolson, 1964), p. 188; *Memorials of Fox* (ed. Russell, 1800), vol. II, p. 361; Brown, *French Revolution*, p. 38.

²⁶ Joseph Priestley, *Letters to Edmund Burke*, pp. 140–41.

IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE to think that such cross-Channel enthusiasm as flowered for the Revolution was an exclusive emotion of England's revolutionary pretenders. It was a widely shared sentiment among many in England who would have thought of themselves as moderate reformers but, given the high drama of the events (and their not inconvenient venue in a foreign land), made for a moment common cause with those whom one historian has called the doctrinaires of "the Clean Sweep." Thus, good liberal English doctrine managed to accommodate itself, and eloquently, to the French climacteric of the new spirit abroad in Europe. For Charles James Fox, too, the capture of the Bastille was an historical denouement:

How much the greatest event it is that ever happened in the world; and how much the best!²⁵

That covered, by any reckoning, a great many world-happenings, not a few of which would on the calculations of a soberer day be given no small moral worth. But the affinity between enthusiasm and the superlative is not to be denied. What is new is quickly taken to be unique; what is hopeful or meliorative, in the modest way of complex human affairs, is greeted as a sign of final things; and what may be good or important or encouraging must needs be elevated to a place in some cosmic scenario.

From young Wordsworth to old Godwin the infatuation was never at a loss for words. When Dr Joseph Priestley took his turn among the dozens of radicals who rushed to refute Edmund Burke's polemic against the enthusiasts of French Revolution, he conveniently discovered that some of the rhetoric of both extremes was handily interchangeable:

These great events, in many respects unparalleled in all history, make a totally new, a most wonderful, and important, era in the history of mankind. It is, to adopt your own rhetorical style, a change from darkness to light, from superstition to sound knowledge, and from a most debasing servitude to a state of the most exalted freedom. It is a liberating of all the powers of man from that variety of fetters, by which they have hitherto been held. So that, in comparison with what has been, now only can we expect to see what men really are, and what they can do.²⁶

And here are the even more lurid words of William Hazlitt with which, in describing the *idée maitresse* of his generation, he almost (but not quite) entranced himself:

A new world was opening to the astonished sight. Scenes, lovely as hope can paint, dawned on the imagination; visions of unsullied bliss lulled the

senses, and hid the darkness of surrounding objects, rising in bright succession and endless gradations, like the steps of that ladder which was once set upon the earth, and whose top reached to heaven. Nothing was too mighty for this new-begotten hope; and the path that led to human happiness seemed as plain as the pictures in the *Pilgrim's Progress* leading to Paradise. . . .²⁷

THE IMAGINATIVE EXTENSION of political ideas and their embellishment by myth and metaphor induce an ideological atmosphere in which men, beginning with more ordinary and even humdrum social concerns, come to think of their activities in terms of the life-and-death purposes of mission and destiny. Symbolic deeds become seductive, and the whole movement takes on a compulsive human solidarity which a more sober choice of comrades would have avoided. One English committee, with a curious combination of utopianism and revolutionism, established itself to gather funds for the construction of a large mill in Nottinghamshire; it is the year 1788, and it was to stand as the symbol of the centenary of the English Revolution of 1688 and indeed it was to be called "the Revolution-mill." Alas, it failed miserably. Of a more permanent troublesomeness is the problem of political alliance and personal association which I have referred to by using Ignazio Silone's phrase about "the choice of comrades."

Two prevailing attitudes emerge and, in turn, come to dominate the intellectual scene. In the beginning there are only a few who can bear to secede from enthusiasm long enough to examine their own ranks. When they do—as we shall later see—they tend to withdraw from the simpler notions of good versus evil and from an uncritical confidence that all who would strike a blow against old tyranny are necessarily stalwarts of an authentic new freedom. An Anglo-French exchange on the subject of the debate between Burke and Paine may be used to illustrate this briefly. Sir Samuel Romilly, in the spring of

1791, reported to his liberal correspondents in Paris of the stir being made by Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*. This latest polemic against Burke was "full of spirit and energy, and likely to produce a very great effect. . . ." In fact it had done so already, having gone through three editions in a fortnight, and indeed "has made converts of many persons who were before enemies to the revolution. . . ." In a striking reply, the French correspondent offered the following dry comment:

Nous avons lu l'ouvrage de M. Paine en réponse à M. Burke; c'est la folie inverse. (We have read Mr Paine's work in answer to Mr Burke; it is the opposite extreme of madness.)²⁸

I have already referred to this interchangeable polarity of the extremes, and it appears to be a lurking suspicion among many contemporaries. "Since you could not be one of the grand movers," Mary Wollstonecraft wrote to Edmund Burke, "the next *best* thing that dazzled your imagination was to be a conspicuous opposer. . . ." Perhaps she was only trying to score a debater's point, but she went on to speculate: ". . . had you been a Frenchman, you would have been . . . a violent revolutionist. . . . Your imagination would have taken fire. . . ."²⁹

One other turning-point in the fiery debate needs to be mentioned. In the decline of Anglo-French ideological affinities there developed a deep political and intellectual suspiciousness of the viability of "a system", a distrust of the idea and a dislike for the word. The young William Cobbett, from his transatlantic vantage-point in Philadelphia (he had been travelling from London to Paris when the turbulence of French events forced him to turn back, board a sail ship in Havre and land in America in October 1792), expressed it with characteristic vigour and perception. In 1794 he published some observations on Dr Joseph Priestley's own "emigration", and it amounted to a furious critique of an English Jacobin for his "systematic" revolutionary views and for his utopian indictment of "the System."

System-mongers are an unreasonable species of mortals: time, place, climate, nature itself, must give way. They must have the same government in every quarter of the globe; when perhaps there are not two countries which can possibly admit of the same form of government at the same time. A thousand hidden causes, a thousand circumstances and unforeseen events, conspire to the forming of a government. It is always done little by little. When completed, it presents nothing like a *system*; nothing like a thing composed, and written in a book. . . .³⁰

²⁷ William Hazlitt, *Memoirs of Holcroft* (1816), vol. II, p. 195; *The Life of Thomas Holcroft* (ed. Colby, 1925), vol. II, p. 92.

²⁸ *Memoirs of the Life of Sir Samuel Romilly* (1840), vol. I, pp. 415-18.

²⁹ Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Men, in a Letter to Edmund Burke* (1790), pp. 108-9.

³⁰ William Cobbett, *Observations on Priestley's Emigration* (Philadelphia, 1794), in *Cobbett's Political Works* (ed. Cobbett, 1836), vol. I, p. 25. A more complete text is in William Cobbett, *Peter Porcupine's Works* (12 vols., 1801), vol. I, pp. 147-220. See also: Anne Holt, *A Life of Joseph Priestley* (1931); Asa Briggs, *William Cobbett* (1967).

To the charges of absolutism and globalism, Cobbett added a third which derived from his own impassioned libertarian critique of the French Revolution. With both the author of *The Rights of Man* (Thomas Paine) and *The Rights of Women* (Mary Wollstonecraft) in a Paris dungeon he begged to be forgiven for dwelling on the wrongs rather than the rights that accompany a violent transformation of society. The repressive intolerance—indeed the guillotine itself, whose latest victims were Mesdames Roland and Hebert, the “goddesses of liberty”—had given the lie to Dr Priestley’s promise of a new, harmonious and virtuous system.

Either he foresaw the consequences of the French revolution, or he did not foresee them: if he did not, he must confess that his penetration was far inferior to that of his antagonists, and even to that of the multitude of his countrymen; for they all foresaw them. If he did foresee them, he ought to blush at being called the “friend of human happiness”; for, to foresee such dreadful calamities, and to form a deliberate plan for bringing them upon his country, he must have a disposition truly diabolical. If he did not foresee them, he must have an understanding little superior to that of an idiot; if he did, he must have the heart of a *Marat*. Let him choose.

Cobbett did not need to wait for Priestley’s choice; he was confident he knew what it would be. “No: the French revolution is his system, and sooner than not see it established, I much question if he would not with pleasure see the massacre of all the human race. . . .”

Returning, however, from such flights of polemical rhetoric, Cobbett put the more sober point of democratic choice and consent: for it is on this issue that populist dogmas are severely tested.

Even suppose his intended plan of improvement had been the best in the world, instead of the worst, the people of England had certainly a right to reject it. He claims as an indubitable right, the right of thinking for *others*, and yet he will not permit the people of England to think for *themselves*. Paine says, “What a nation *wills*, it has a right to *do*.” Consequently, what a whole nation does *not will*, it has a right *not to do*. . . .

Whether or not the right of revolution could be so easily coupled in democratic theory with the right of counter-revolution, it was obvious that so long as the right of reply existed the counter-attack would grow in force and intensity. Hadn’t the utopian dream shown itself to be only a “visionary delusion”? If “A man of all countries

is a man of no country,” was the cosmopolitanism of the new enlightenment anything but “political cant”? Cobbett’s questions were calculated to upset every troubled English friend of revolution—“Would he really prefer the proceedings of a *revolutionary tribunal* to those of a court of justice in England?”³¹

4. Retreat to the Centre

WHEN THE LIBERAL MODERATES had recovered their equanimity, always at the expense of their enthusiasm and their fraternity, they would manage to find their way to a new position which would try to hold to a centre without either Burke or Paine, embracing neither “extreme of madness.” It was a very English position at the centre which a whole generation hoped that William Pitt would hold. His “apostacy” from liberalising principles was felt to be unconscionable, and his identification of French revolutionism with English reform was held even worse. If the noisy cheer-leading from the ranks of the English Jacobinical sympathisers helped to give that impression in 1789, by 1793 hasty attempts were being made on many sides to divorce the historical phenomena in foreign parts from the political urgencies of one’s native land. Nobody less than James Mackintosh (although the pamphlet was signed only “By an Honest Man” it was known to be by the young radical hero of the debate with Burke) tried to clarify the point in an open letter to Pitt:

These attempts to obtain Reform disclaim all alliance with the magnificent principles, or the perilous speculations, by which men, according to their various prepossessions, will suppose our neighbours to have been nobly animated or fatally deluded. . . .

The disclaimer suffered for its coming so late and so ambivalently. The polarisation had already gone too far for Pitt’s forces to be convinced that the Reformers were basing themselves on “notions of liberty purely English. . . .” The original delight in the spectacles of Paris had doubtless touched, beyond all obvious political sensitivities, on a deep nerve of tribal loyalties. Of course, important issues of principle—and of property and power—divided the disputants; an extra element of outraged Englishness in the national argument only reinforced the factor of extremism in the mutual response. Mackintosh deluded himself if

³¹ Cobbett, *Peter Porcupine’s Works*, vol. 1, pp. 168–9.

he thought that he could beat an easy or convincing retreat, and try to re-join the issue on other, higher ground.

Every passion and every frailty, in the ardour of dispute, seduced men into extremes. Many honest men were driven into Toryism by their fears. Many sober men were betrayed into Republicanism by their enthusiasm....

Would Pitt now be prepared to "mitigate extremes, conciliate differences"? Or would he continue to "paint moderation as the virtue of cowards, and compromise as the policy of knaves, to the stormy and intolerant enthusiasm of faction"?

The same harassed, desperately concerned note was struck two years later by William Godwin, trying his best to head off a final polarisation of forces, even at the price of criticising his own friends on the extreme reformist left: "The London Corresponding Society has been thoughtlessly pursuing a conduct, which was calculated sooner or later to bring on scenes of confusion. . . ." He remained confident that "reform must come, it is a resistless tide", but—

In order to maintain the peace and tranquillity of society, it is necessary to temporise. We must both accommodate ourselves to the empire of old prejudices, and to the strong and decisive influx of new opinions. . . . We must not stretch the strings of our instrument so far, as to put them in instant danger to snap.

Something was indeed in danger of snapping, when no forces were there "to hold the balance even." Alarm on the right had led to a broiling irritability, to folly, to a call for blood, to "an unscrupulous and sanguinary spirit." Godwin was horrified by the prospect of the new legislation proposed in this atmosphere by Lord Grenville and William Pitt:

The present bills force men into the extremest state of hostility; they leave no opening for treaty; they offer no compromise; they inculcate an obstinate and impracticable temper upon both parties. At a time when conciliation is most necessary, they most deeply inspire into us sentiments of animosity.

Sir Philip Francis, who had unimpeachable

radical credentials as the chief instigator of the trial of Warren Hastings and as a founder of the Friends of the People, tried to put the retreat to the centre in another, more positive way:

At first sight, it looks like bravery to run into extremes; but I am sure that to keep the middle path, and to be ready to encounter the violence of either side, or of both, when they unite, as they very often do, is the surest proof of political courage, as well as of public virtue.³²

From this quarter these were indeed new watchwords: conciliation, moderation, accommodation, compromise. It surprised no one that they were not taken to be matters of principle but only of desperate tactics. And yet in that turbulent decade of the 1790s, when great European events greatly changed men's minds, the desperation was not unconnected with sincerity. For more than a decade now Christopher Wyvill had been conducting his correspondence with Pitt in public, and by 1796 he had few enough hopes that another open letter would help win back the apostate. Yet he, like Mackintosh and Godwin, felt it imperative to win new space for the Reformers by blocking out a central area between "the wild projects of Paine" and "the wild counsels of Burke." Pitt was lost, Pitt had failed:

Sound policy required him to hold a middle course between the two dangerous extremes of Paine and Burke. . . . Instead of shunning each of these inflammatory men, he flew from the turbulent Republican to embrace the factious Enthusiast of the Aristocracy. To the wildest flights of Burke's maddening imagination he nods approbation. . . .

The sharper sense of his own lost cause and the growing feeling of failure had some maddening effect on Wyvill's own imagination, and a year later in the next exchange with Pitt (it was, alas, all one-sided) there was a reversion to the earlier formula of reform or revolution. A decade earlier this stratagem appeared to be—and would again so appear to be for the generation of 1832!—a legitimate and hopeful kind of blackmail: liberal concessions were to be wrested from a reactionary ruling class under threat of the direst catastrophe. Now it seemed at best a poignant cry for living space in a time of repression. In any event it issued from such confused minds and battered hearts that only something like this emerged—the characteristically mixed metaphor of the day:

. . . It is but too evident that the fortress of our Constitution is in a dilapidated state, and ready to overwhelm us beneath its ruins. It behoves us to repair with speed the venerable pile; to labour in

³² *A Letter to the Rt. Hon. William Pitt on his Apostacy from the Cause of Parliamentary Reform. By an Honest Man* (1793), pp. 29, 38, 43; *The Debate on the French Revolution*, pp. 327–8; Letter to the Rev. Christopher Wyvill (20 Jan. 1795), in Wyvill, *Political Papers* (1800), vol. V, pp. 280–1; *Debate on the French Revolution*, p. 142.

this work of Love with unwearied assiduity; and with the wise counsel and assistance of those *Master Builders* in political architecture, to whom we are already so deeply indebted, to fortify and complete the spacious Tower of the Constitution, in which we and our Posterity may then rest securely protected against every foe, and safe from those storms and tempests, which, in the course of ages, may assail us. . . .³³

BUT IN THE EARLY and high period of a radical movement's ingathering, when men are being rallied to the white light of a principle, the tone and the language and the whole militant thrust is, as we have seen, profoundly different. There is little concern with middle courses when the storm and tempest are themselves the natural agencies for good and true safety. Men of mitigation seem either to be cowards or knaves, and all worthy souls have no doubts about the choice between the noble animation of magnificent principles or the so-called fatal delusions of perilous speculations. And there was indeed little enough sensitivity to the darker elements of "madness", or of badness.

In the great political trial of John Horne Tooke in 1794, the Attorney-General forced Major Cartwright as a defence witness to confront just this point: namely, "what persons he would take to his assistance in compassing the end he had in view." More specifically, the question was whether the Tookes and the Cartwrights and the Wyvills would work together "with people of different political principles, whatever their principles were." Cartwright's answer indicated his rigorous lack of concern over this calculated feeler towards some form of guilt by association: "I would take the assistance of any man whose end I thought right. . . ." He went on to be even more candid since this reply could be misunderstood as a defence only of the movement of right- and like-minded.

I have signed many petitions for a reform in parliament, in company with men whom I have thought very bad men indeed; but there is no man so bad with whom I could not sign a petition and concur for obtaining that object.

In a word: there could, by definition, be no enemies in his own ranks or among his own allies. The comment by Chief Justice Eyre scored a

point with which Major Cartwright never came to grips:

That may be a very sincere declaration, but it is not a very prudent one; because, in connecting yourself with bad men, you can never be sure that you may not be carried beyond your own purpose.

Prudence, however, was not a virtue to which, at the moment, persuasive appeal could be made. When purposes become re-defined in the vague affinities of metaphorical language one is no longer quite aware of exactly how far one is being carried along in an historic movement.

Here the metaphor was one of *fellow travellers* (and we will never thereafter be able to lose sight of this old horse-and-buggy of an image). John Horne Tooke stated that his object "did not go as far as Mr Paine's." He spoke of "persons travelling in the same stage-coach, and getting out at different places. . . ." But getting off the moving stage-coach of reform would obviously present the same kind of dangers as of (in the later trope) "jumping off the locomotive of history." For Cartwright these were perils that were necessary and, in any case, unavoidable: for, as he insisted (his language, a contemporary noted, was one of "bold, nervous, animated eloquence"), he was not a man of prudence but of truth.

As the matter originated in my having been asked if I would get into the stage-coach of reform, without regarding the company that might happen to be in the coach, or to that effect, I must also remark that he who has a necessary journey to take, and no means but by stage-coach, has not the choice of his company.

As his niece has written in her biographical memoir, "This opinion he never changed, and to the end of his life he never refused to join in any political act, which he himself approved, with any persons whom he believed to be travelling the same road. . . ."³⁴ But what happens when stage-coaches break down or, as occurs rather more often, fellow-travellers fall out amongst themselves?

It is the final act in this chapter of English ideology, a chapter of doubt and disenchantment but also (as ideological cycles go) of "resurrection"; and I shall be dealing with these themes next month.

(A concluding section will be published in January)

³³ Christopher Wyvill, *The Correspondence of the Rev. C. Wyvill with the Rt. Hon. William Pitt* (1797), p. vii. *Correspondence with Pitt* (1796), Pt. I, pp. 74-5.

³⁴ *Life of Cartwright*, vol. I, pp. 218-21.

Three Poems

Metro from Marcel-Sembat to Porte De Champerret

The asphalt is melting.
My head
Is a stain upon the subway wall.
Somewhere
Cannibals are eyeing each other in the jungle
I think
It doesn't matter at all.

Certain people sit with their mouths open
Some lean
Before hitting the pile.
Voice within voice whispers
"Worms!"
A baby is crying. I smile.

The curious look over my shoulder
Are embarrassed
I'm having a poem
Are afraid
Seeing no pre-printed puzzle
Dear God, keep us from poems in the subway
It's bad enough to do it at home.

It's important to think about nothing
Not that
Third rail, not people, not hate
Several thousand
People are pushed crotch to elbow
One should giggle. Just one.
It's too late.

Take this poem in your purse to the jungle
Some night
Find a native that's reasonably calm
Read him
Quietly of trips in the subway
Translate slowly. At least
Until dawn.

Susan Chakraverty

The Big Director

He's tired now, always—
Eighteen legendary stone of
failure, heaped on a canvas chair.
He blames the studio.

Art, of course, of a kind,
is what he's after—the capital A,
the class product—
but this, too, is a B feature:

so he sleeps on the lot,
so what the hell anyway?—
let it go out, this dumb show
from the place of skulls.

And if he wakes it's to say
"Do me a love scene, boobies"—
to walk off, to call his wife,
to come back yawning.

John Mole

The Grasshopper

Patience wears out stones: and poets too
Are worn out by a patience
For poetry, and for the unquiet poem.
But is the grasshopper impatient when
She drowns in autumn dew, a meagre fury?

Robert Nye



Column

THERE ARE MANY growth industries in the world today, but it is doubtful if any of them, however successful, can quite match the performance of sociology in recent years. In terms of sales, output, profitability, manpower and capital employed, or any other economic criterion one might care to apply, there are few industries to compare with it; nor, at the present time, does there seem to be any prospect of a falling off in its rate of expansion. The market is flooded with its products, whether in the form of goods, such as books, reports, doctoral theses or learned journals, or of services, in the shape of advice and consultancy, lectures, conferences, symposia. Indeed, the public demand seems insatiable, and this applies equally to individuals and to institutions, such as governments, universities, business corporations, advertising agencies, television companies, none of which would regard themselves as capable of functioning efficiently without the aid and advice of at least a few captive sociologists.

Even more striking evidence, perhaps, of the industry's capacity for further expansion is provided by the hordes of eager young candidates for entry into it. In recent years, sociology has become one of the most popular and fashionable subjects for university study, and its influence is also strongly felt in related subjects, such as history, economics, philosophy, which for absurdly old-fashioned reasons are still allotted a separate place in the curriculum. So long as this situation continues, we are not likely to see an end of the sociological boom, though of course, like every other industry at the present time, even sociology is not immune to the dangers of galloping inflation.

With such dazzling prospects before it, the industry may well be satisfied with what it has already achieved and face the future with justified confidence. Yet, at the same time, any one eager to put his money into the industry would be well advised to bear certain dangers in mind. One is that the industry is essentially dependent upon the most advanced forms of technology. The machinery it employs is of the most sophisticated (and expensive) kind and there is no assurance that it will continue to be available in sufficient quantities to maintain, even less surpass, the rate of growth which the industry has recently

achieved. There are even signs that, despite intense demands, the machine tools of the industry are already pricing themselves out of the market.

What is true of machinery also applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to manpower. The technological equipment of the sociology industry is by now of such complexity and elaboration that, if it is to function efficiently, it requires a work force of equal sophistication; the men must match the machines. While no one can complain of the actual number of new entrants into the industry, some of its leaders have recently expressed doubts about their quality. Any employer responsible for the maintainance and profitable operation of machines that are the product of years of intensive research and represent a formidable investment of scarce resources might, for instance, hesitate about handing them over to the bearded wine-bibbing sociology student who recently confronted H.M. the Queen at Stirling University. It is true that he produced no visible effect upon the Queen; but, if one may judge from photographs, his mere appearance might well be enough to throw a highly sensitive machine out of adjustment.

These are not the only dangers; there are others, though all related, directly or indirectly, to the same basic problem of quality. It is unfortunately true that some of the products which, in response to the pressure of demand, the industry has recently put upon the market have been of noticeably shoddy material and inferior workmanship. One regrets to have to say that this is particularly true of the products of the great Lévi-Strauss/Leach combine, one of the largest mergers that has ever taken place in the industry, in which, however, quality control appears to be almost totally non-existent.

THESE CAUTIONARY WORDS which, I hope, will not scare the prospective investor too much, have been inspired by reading Stanislaw Andreski's book on *Social Sciences as Sorcery*.¹ Professor Andreski is himself a sociologist, who holds the chair in that subject at Reading University, and it is out of love and respect for it, rather than hostility, that he has written what constitutes a devastating attack upon some of those who in recent years have threatened to bring it into public disrepute.

I should at once confess that I have a personal reason for liking Professor Andreski's book, because it has helped to alleviate the feeling of distress and dismay which I have experienced recently in reading certain works of sociology. It is the particular feeling they inspire that either I am very stupid (a possibility which can never be entirely excluded) or that the authors of the

¹ Andre Deutsch, £2.95.

works in question are either mad or, if not mad, then so incapable of expressing themselves with any degree of clarity as to be something very near it. I am, unfortunately, unable to quote the particular passages which have provoked that experience, because my immediate instinct has been to close the books in which they occurred and throw them away; though the doubts which they arouse continue, painfully, to linger in my mind.

Fortunately, Professor Andreski's book abounds in quotations which exactly reproduce the same feeling, which I might perhaps call the McLuhan/Marcuse Effect. Take, for instance, the following passage from *International Systems and the Modernization of Societies*, by two British sociologists, J. P. Nettl and Roland Robertson.

Thus our conception of modernization runs as follows; Modernization is the process whereby national elites seek successfully to reduce their *atimic* status and move towards equivalence with other "well-placed" nations. The goal of equivalence is not a fixed but a moving "target"; and the perception of it will depend both on the values and exigencies of the international system and on the values, dispositions and capabilities of the nation in question, as experienced particularly by national élites. Although the international system is the focal point of our analysis, we do not wish to impose a teleology on the international system. Rather, we have viewed the international system as one "where (nearly) everybody's values and objectives are (usually) formulated in relation to somebody else's" and where the choice of technological objects for acquisition and use is also based on a widely diffused "pool" of knowledge and a high degree of selectivity in relation to varying definitions of modernity.

This "definition" of modernisation is a by no means extreme example of the kind of jargon, mumbo-jumbo, and pseudo-scientific language which is characteristic of much recent sociological writing. It is in fact a relatively inoffensive one. Even so, the reader would find it hard to guess that "Modernization", in the context in which the authors are using it, is not a scientific term at all but merely a common-sense expression for a process by which peoples and nations try to bring themselves up-to-date; and if he does not guess this, he will find it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to grasp what the authors in fact are trying so clumsily and pretentiously to talk about.

Professor Andreski, however, is fortunately able to suggest a means of therapy for the student of sociology who may be suffering from the McLuhan/Marcuse Effect; or who, as he puts it, wishes "to find his way through the verbal smog and be able to assess the trustworthiness of high ranking academics."

I would suggest that the only way of going about it is, firstly, to test your brain power on texts falling

within a field where there is little room for bluff, and which are intellectually demanding without requiring extensive specialist knowledge; namely the less technical books on the philosophy of the natural sciences, such as P. W. Bridgman's *Logic of Modern Physics*, or Rudolf Carnap's *Philosophical Foundations of Physics*, or Bertrand Russell's *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy*, or J. H. Woodger's *Biological Principles*—to mention a few among many eligible titles. Now, if despite a serious effort—and remember that these are not bedside books, and require concentration and persistence—you cannot understand them, then keep away from high-powered theories and do not attempt to produce anything very abstract yourself. Be honest and adjust your aims to your abilities. There are many areas of sociology, anthropology, political science, psychology and economics where useful work can be done without recourse to high-powered abstractions, many areas where common sense combined with a good range of factual information suffices. However, if you have mastered a number of books such as those just mentioned and despite having made a decent effort, still cannot understand what some sociological or political or psychological luminary has written or said, then you can legitimately presume that it is his fault rather than yours, and justifiably suspect that it might all be nonsense.

I FIND Professor Andreski's advice admirable; and how much I wish that the Andreski test were made compulsory for anyone who wished to devote himself to sociology, either as student or as teacher. Though if it were, how many academic heads would roll, how many professorial chairs would be suddenly vacated, how many dull and pretentious volumes would be consigned to the flames? Unfortunately, one has to remember that, among the thousands, perhaps by now even millions, of students of sociology enrolled in universities throughout the world, very few have ever subjected themselves to a discipline of this kind, or indeed to any kind of discipline which requires a measure of logical thought combined with command of a given area of knowledge, however restricted. One must also remember that it is from the ranks of such students that their teachers are eventually recruited, and what guarantee can there be that, having started so badly, they should ever think to repair their deficiencies later? Human nature being what it is, they are more likely to conclude that what was not necessary in the student is equally unnecessary in the teacher, and continue their climb up the academic ladder in the justified confidence that they can continue to write and lecture without anyone noticing that what they say is nonsense.

Professor Andreski, indeed, reserves some of his savagest criticisms for the effects which the expansion of the social sciences has had upon education, both in schools and in universities; but savage as they are, they can hardly be called exaggerated. And it is fair that, in this respect, he should have chosen as his main target the United

States, because nowhere else in the world have such vast resources been devoted to the development of the social sciences.

Let me ask the following questions. Which field of activity in America is the least efficient? And which employs the highest number of psychologists and sociologists? The plain answer is, Education. And in which field has the quality of the product been declining most rapidly? And where has the number of psychologists and sociologists been increasing fastest? Again: in education. Or, if instead of comparing it with other sectors within the society, we compare the American educational situation with that of other nations, we get a similar result. For where do the schools employ a proportionately larger number of psychologists and sociologists and all kinds of hybrids between them? In America, almost needless to say. Nonetheless, if we judge by the amount of knowledge imparted (rather than the number of diplomas issued) in relation to the expenditure incurred, then there can be no doubt that the American schools are the least efficient in the world, not excluding the poorest countries of Africa or Latin America. I do not think that anywhere else in the world can you find students who have been going to school for at least twelve years but can read only with difficulty, such as you can meet quite frequently in American universities. What is more, the schools have been getting worse as the number of personnel trained in sociology, psychology and education has been increasing. Perhaps it is all a coincidence. But in no other country can you become a professor at a top university without having first to learn how to write competently. And this doesn't include people of foreign origin, or those brought up in a different language, but men and women who know no other language but American English, and yet contravene the rules stated in American grammar books and use words with scant regard to what it says in Webster's dictionary. And in which subjects do they congregate? Inevitably in sociology, psychology and education; and now increasingly in anthropology, political science and even history, as these subjects become more "scientific". It may not be, then, very far-fetched to conclude that the decline in the quality of education may have had something to do with the expansion of the social sciences—to be sure, not because of any logical necessity, but owing to the character which these subjects have acquired.

IT WILL BE SEEN THAT it is not the legitimate pursuit, but the abuse and distortion, of the social sciences which Professor Andreski objects to. He is at pains to emphasise that, as subjects of study, they are exposed to difficulties which hardly any other subjects encounter and therefore make, not smaller, but larger demands among those who practise them.

Among those difficulties one might enumerate the following. In the first place, they are subject to a kind of Michelson/Morley effect, by which what is observed varies with the position of the observer, of such a magnitude that it can significantly distort even the simplest and most elementary observation. In studying society we are

also studying ourselves, and to do so with anything approaching objectivity requires of us an almost abject modesty and humility about what we are doing. In the second place, sociology as a science suffers under the major disabilities that, for the most part, its material is not measurable and that its results are not susceptible of verification by experiment. To achieve valid, or even sensible, results under such conditions requires a combination of intellectual qualities so rare as to explain why there are very few sociologists of genuinely the first rank. Thirdly, by the very nature of their subject matter, the social sciences provide a field of study such that, the higher the degree of abstraction, the greater the danger that all genuine content will be lost. In this respect they are at the opposite extreme from the natural sciences, and for that reason can never hope to achieve the same kind of certainty in their conclusions. And lastly, the complexity of the subject matter and the number of variables they have to take into account are so great that only very rarely can they hope to arrive at significant and lasting results. For the most part, they operate in an area of dense obscurity illuminated by rare and brilliant flashes of insight and intuition.

MOST OF ALL, perhaps, we should realise that sociology cannot evade, or pretend to overcome, its problems by a crude imitation or a parody of the methods and techniques of natural science, except where the subject matter is demonstrably adapted to them. When the great guru, Lévi-Strauss, in *Le Cru et le Cuit*, presents us with the formula:

[Urine→fire (—)]→[milk→plants (+)]

we have the gratifying sensation that it possesses something at least of the properties of a mathematical equation. Closer inspection reveals that the symbols employed have no relation whatever to their mathematical function; the formula is in fact a kind of rune or incantation which, by a process of primitive magic, strives to endow ingenious and poetic speculation with the power and prestige of scientific thought. As Professor Andreski says: "One of the great attractions of this kind of poetry masquerading as science is that it would be very difficult to invent a topic more remote from everything that matters in social life, and better fitted for a non-committal conversation among pseudo-intellectual international bureaucrats of most divergent outlooks and loyalties."

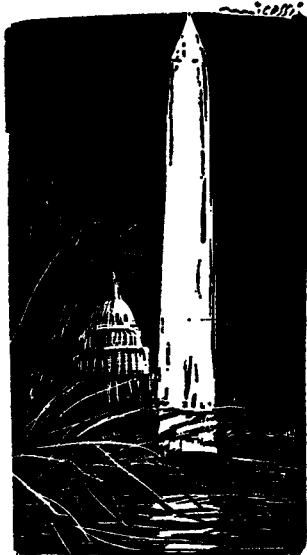
Professor Andreski has written a valuable and indeed a necessary book. Certainly it will serve a most useful purpose if it will help to protect us from the kind of corruption of thought and language which has become so widespread in the social sciences in recent years. R

AMERICAN CHRONICLE

A Harvard Memoir

Remembering Three Teachers

By Adam Ulam



THERE WAS, not so long ago in America, a special mystique about education which was centred around but not confined to the Eastern schools; and like every mystique it contained a lot of nonsense as well as a small kernel of truth. Part of the blame could be attributed to bad books and Hollywood films, many of them amazingly enough not about Williams

or Harvard, but about the English public schools, West Point, or Rockne of Notre Dame. A classical tale was that of a young man, uncertain or confused, when suddenly an interview with an understanding coach or dean, a friendly hand on his shoulder, would turn him away from a road to perdition, the life of a wastrel and drunkard, to a sober, useful and profitable career.

From that C. Aubrey Smith-Robert Donat picture of education we have plunged, after a short interval, into one shaped by C. Wright Mills and Herbert Marcuse. The university is no longer a school of character, it is a sausage factory designed to produce obedient and conformist tools for the Establishment. To be sure, there are still bad books and movies, more than before as a matter of fact. That kindly dean who puffed on the pipe while glancing with idiotic benevolence at a young man across the desk has been transformed into a hard-faced official, probably with a private line to the F.B.I. or the

Pentagon, trying to dissuade the young idealist from seizing his office. But the dominant stereotypes are fed much more by administrators and sociologists with their investigations and statistics. And, again, for a vast majority of them, even the so-called moderates, education is not and should not be the prosaic business of learning and enjoying various skills and professions. It is a magic which if employed correctly will yet save society and the world; and, if not, will pull them down along with institutions of higher learning. The old mystique had the saving quality of being centered around the individual teacher and student. In the new one you have vast numbers of teachers catering to the vast crowds of students (to be sure, in small groups, as well as students instructing each other, again in small groups), all of them milling around full of indignation and the zeal to remake society, to devise innovative ways of teaching and interacting, to change the quality of life. . . .

MYSTIQUE AND EDUCATION do not mix. The troubled young man of yore should have sought help not from the dean or the coach but from a minister, psychiatrist, or an uncle. And in real life he probably did. The young men and women who are troubled about politics today, which is in itself quite normal and understandable, should then become politically active. *Indirectly* the university, just as every school, ought to and often does help its members in their personality problems. If it tries to do so directly it is only asking for trouble, and probably does more harm than good. The same goes for politics.

The reason lies not in the ascription to the university of any unusual function, in viewing it as a temple of learning which ought not to be penetrated by any vulgar noises from the outside. Quite the contrary. The reason must be sought once again in the fact that education is a very prosaic activity and not magic. If at all good, education must possess the qualities of precision and clarity; it must deal for the most part in facts rather than feelings. It is to be hoped, indeed, that technical competence makes for a fuller personality, sometimes for a happier individual, perhaps for one who is more compassionate or creative than he would be without it. But the necessary goal must be that competence, the rest coming, so to speak, as a bonus. Who would exchange a competent doctor for one who, while incompetent, had an impeccable bedside manner as well as a highly developed social conscience? And it is a mistake to think that the goal of undergraduate education can or ought to be drastically different from the professional one: it must be to try to make *every* student know well—to understand thoroughly—*something*. A

liberal education seeks to indoctrinate the student in *curiosity*; a totalitarian (a religious) one, in an *attitude*.

SUCH GENERALITIES can be best understood in referring to the period when higher education in America became a serious, but not as yet depressing, business. It would be unrealistic to claim that the faculties of colleges and universities, even the leading ones, were in the post-War period composed entirely of authorities in their fields, that the students *en masse* eschewed easy or superficial courses in favour of austere instructive ones. But in most good American schools the focus of interest shifted from the traditional concept of the popular teacher, *i.e.* one who was a "character" who just cracked jokes, or exuded friendly and therapeutic influence, to one who was a craftsman in his field. The latter was not necessarily famous, nor in some cases what is known as a productive scholar, but he had something interesting, sometimes amusing, to say.

IT IS CHARLES MCILWAIN who comes most readily to my mind under this rubric. He was to retire from active teaching in 1946, and being already of great age communication between him and a first-year graduate student could not be easy. His scholarship was of a narrow (some would say pedantic) type. He was far from being a dazzling lecturer, and his field—English constitutional history and earlier political theory—appeared to be of little relevance to the issues and concerns of modern politics. Neither Dr Marx nor Dr Freud were summoned to help in the interpretation of the series of long and obscure constitutional documents or medieval and early modern political doctrines. It was, it appeared at first, a dry, legalistic approach which made of figures as colourful as Henry II or Henry VIII just legal innovators, and of events so rich and varied in their background as the Puritan and American Revolutions mere struggles between contending constitutional interpretations.

Yet soon one realised that he was immersed in genuine historical reality, that by having one's attention focussed so well on one vital aspect of it the student was immeasurably better prepared to understand other aspects and connections than he would have been after a course which dully and cautiously tried to appease every opinion and approach. This proceeded partly from the fascination inherent in tracing a clause or a single word of an old document to its real meaning in a way as intriguing as is the search through real and feigned clues on which a good mystery-writer takes his reader. As against many a course in social science from which a student

emerges with intellectual indigestion, and the feeling that everything depends on everything else so what is the use, one came from this type of experience with the satisfaction of having grasped something important. Or, if dissatisfied, then with the right kind of dissatisfaction: *because* the argument was so impressive, so genuinely a product of learning and conviction, that one was stimulated to probe again for weak spots, was stimulated to try to improve upon it, to grasp for alternative solutions. One also emerged from McIlwain's courses inoculated against superficiality in approaching history, and against the kind of intellectual argument which consists mainly in bandying names and views of real and alleged authorities. It is insufficient to describe such teaching as challenging; one learned to understand history.

The deep, perhaps prudent suspicion of learning which has always characterised American society has been responsible for the belief that the student has somehow to be entrapped or scared into it. Hence the vogue at one time of the professorial "character": you were entranced or amused by his personality and antics, and lo! before you realised you learned something. Nowadays the idea is to link the teaching process to "issues." The pupil is to be interrupted no longer by being amused but by being made anxious or indignant. Hannibal as a child, we are told, was made to hate the Romans through being compelled by his father to learn Latin. Now we would reverse this process. Hence the popularity in certain pedagogical circles of the idea of little workshops instructing in the iniquities of American imperialism, pollution, and male chauvinism: is this not the most efficacious way of making the youth of today interested in economics, environment, and sociology?

The amusement approach may be exemplified by the parable of Russian history employed by a professor who will remain nameless. You have the eternal Russian peasant drowsing on the stove. Suddenly his slumber is interrupted, seized by an incomprehensible access of energy he scrambles down (few could understand how one could sleep on the stove but it only added to the inherent mystery of the subject), and flings himself into a wild dance. And then his energy and passion are drained. He grows weary. Back to the stove. There you had the tragic sense of Russian history.

FOR ALL THE ENHANCED INTEREST in things Russian and Soviet after World War II there was a real danger that most of the money and effort expended on new programmes of study and research institutes would be misdirected. Such efforts, it appeared, might throw only a cloak of

academic respectability over the peasant stove and what was soon to become known as the "Kremlinological" approaches: teachers and students would be immersed in the discussion of the Russian soul throughout the ages, or contrariwise, "What will the Russians do next?" The rapidly advancing field of social psychology threatened to reinforce the peasant-stove school: weren't Russians *very tightly* swaddled throughout their infancy, but at times completely unwrapped, thus making for long periods of repression punctured by episodes of wild anarchic freedom?

We were saved from such extravagances and stultifying stereotypes very largely through the presence in the academic world then of a tiny handful of distinguished scholars in the field of Russian history. They had been teaching and writing for some time, of course, but it is now in this educational emergency that they exerted crucial and beneficial influence. The stove-climbers and swaddlers beat a retreat, constrained in many cases to turn their skills to analysing American society. The budding Kremlinologists were put in their place, which often and quite properly turned out to be the C.I.A. Scholarship prevailed.

ONE OF THE HANDFUL was Professor Michael Karpovich of Harvard. Those who studied directly under him would undoubtedly credit Karpovich with much more than just saving Russian studies from the faults of false exoticism and excessive utilitarianism. His very personality exemplified and emanated some of the best characteristics of the pre-revolutionary Russian intelligentsia, a deep impression of civilised humanity and intellectual liveliness, a strong liberal bias yet free of that dogmatism which made so many Russian intellectuals of that period go astray (in a manner reminiscent, alas, of so many of our own). His favoured field was that of 19th-century Russian intellectual history, and it is no accident that this field was to flourish in American scholarship of the last twenty years.

Few large areas of a foreign culture have become so firmly a part of the American academic idiom as that involved and entrancing story. It required great erudition and firm intellectual balance to guide both the future specialist and the general student safely through a subject so full of pitfalls of false enthusiasm and facile generalisation, to see its organic connection with, at the same time as significant differences from, the general current of Western culture. It was a Russia vastly more complex yet at the same time more understandable than the one of the populariser

who has peopled it almost exclusively with Rasputins, Grand Dukes, and Revolutionaries. Again one feels that the value of this unhurried, unsensational approach transcended its benefits to the future writer of a doctoral dissertation, or a non-specialist through enhanced pleasure in reading a Russian novel. One learned to understand a great nation and its tragic history, in a way that no recital of political facts and economic statistics could furnish by itself. And quite beyond and apart from Russia, one learned *to understand*, which is what education is all about.

THE PHANTOM OF RELEVANCE which we are supposed to worship today has a companion with the somewhat awkward name of Challenging the Traditional Beliefs and Values. To be sure this has become rather difficult, for in true American fashion yesterday's dissent has come close to being today's conformity. Who is truly alienated? One who says he is, or one who thinks himself to be part of the mainstream of American culture but who cannot find a book to read, a film or a play to attend, or sometimes even a tailor to minister to his allegedly non-conformist tastes? The meaning of non-conformity has become hazy and confined; and soon those young intellectuals, with their not uncommon propensity to stress their difference from the common herd and to incur *mild* martyrdom, will be constrained to risk their academic or professional advancement and their social acceptance by proclaiming at cocktail parties that there is no generation gap and that Vice-President Agnew may not be entirely wrong!

In yonder times of which I write, non-conformity still had something of its original and rather bracing meaning. Yes, there were Marxists and even Communists on the faculties of American universities, soon to become the object of interest and pursuit by the Congressional committees, and of the type of reprobation by the media of mass communication which is not reserved for the non-sensitive, non-communicating-with-the-youth college officials and parents. The Communists were, of course, not real non-conformists. They were simply what might be described as geographically misplaced conformists, i.e., professing in New York or in Cambridge, Massachusetts, views and ideas which were desirable and appreciated in Moscow or Minsk. For a real non-conformist, the type which is very essential on every university scene, I offer the example of Professor Joseph Schumpeter.

At first such a characterisation may appear absurd. Here was one of the most famous economists of his era, renowned even before World War I. High academic preferments in Europe, as well as a brief and rather unfortunate stint as

Austria's minister of finance, preceded Schumpeter's arrival at the Economics Department at Harvard. His vivacity and his equally Viennese non-reticence about his social and intellectual achievements would appear to make such characterisation even more absurd.

SCHUMPETER was a non-conformist somewhat in the manner of the man who, asked to join Freemasonry, replied that he could not for two reasons: he was a Catholic and he did not believe in God. Schumpeter did not believe in Keynesian economics, then already in ascendancy in academic and government circles. In fact, on both economic and sociological grounds, he viewed the great English economist's approach as incorrect and unpractical. He was a strong exponent of the classical school of political economy to which he made distinct contributions. Yet he

did not believe that capitalism could be saved or mended.

A book which at the time stirred up a great deal of interest and controversy was Friedrich von Hayek's *Road to Serfdom*. It was a spirited argument on behalf of market economy as against the encroachments and (as the author believed) false premises and promises of the welfare state, which shortly became enthroned with the victory of the Labour Party in Great Britain. A strictly regulated economy was bound to bring a demise of the traditional liberties of the West or, at best, the "muddle of the middle," a society with some of the defects yet without the main benefits of either authoritarianism or liberal democracy. What was needed, Hayek believed, was a firm reaffirmation of the traditional values of liberalism, among them that of free enterprise.

"The New Barbarians"

More students are attending college and more money is being spent on higher education by their parents and by society than ever before. But there is great danger that much of this investment of time and money is being squandered because many college faculties and college administrations are intellectually irresponsible and incompetent.

In countless colleges, the retreat from responsibility is far advanced. Required courses are abolished. The teaching of the traditional curriculum in the arts and sciences is abandoned, in whole or in part. Written examinations and formal grades disappear. Students, including freshmen, are invited to "design your own courses." Even when students begin to concentrate in some field of study, they may find that what used to be regarded as a major has lost its coherence and they are instead encouraged to slosh about in the primordial ooze known as "interdisciplinary studies".

YET THERE IS NO MYSTERY about what a college-educated person should know. It is not necessary to agree entirely with Robert M. Hutchins and the advocates of the "Great Books" to recognize that there are books every college graduate ought to have read and ideas he ought to be familiar with. An educated person should have studied literature, physical science, mathematics, history, philosophy, religion, music, art and the social sciences and know at least one foreign language.

Since there is not time in four years to learn everything that is worth knowing about all these important subjects, college should be a period of intense hard work, rigorous, concentrated and at times exhausting. Intellectual opportunities lost then may never be regained. The books not read, the ideas not mastered, the specific knowledge not

acquired may never become part of one's intellectual endowment.

It is true, of course, that education is a lifelong enterprise. One can take a college course at 50 as well as at 20. But as most people sadly discover, the pressures of career and family life can block all but the strongest drives for intellectual self-improvement. It is a lot easier to learn Russian or study Kant or thread one's way through the labyrinthian passages of Proust and Joyce when one has no competing distractions. Moreover, the sooner one acquires knowledge, the longer one has to enjoy it.

IF ALL THIS IS as self-evident as it surely seems, why then are so many colleges in flight from their intellectual responsibility?

Unfortunately, education attracts an abnormal share of mediocre persons with little exact knowledge or useful talent. Men and women who cannot teach physics or Greek or history, who cannot heal a sick child or build a bridge or write a poem, such persons too often find a living in the intellectual wasteland of educational theory and the educational administration. The one thing they can do is verbalize and generate a smog of memoranda.

Sooner or later, they wear down and override serious teachers and scholars who get bored with long committee meetings and circular arguments about the trivial, the abstract and the incomprehensible. Developing a protective mask of cynicism, serious men retire to their academic specialties, leaving the curriculum to the blighting touch of the so-called innovators.

THERE IS RARELY anything genuinely new in these "reforms." Charles W. Eliot abolished required courses and introduced the free elective system at

Schumpeter, before his students, professed his incredulity as to Hayek's conclusion. How could a fellow-Austrian, a man of his own generation and intellectual and social background, *still* believe that the trend could be reversed, that capitalism, hence liberalism, could be saved? Schumpeter himself had no doubt that on all possible grounds the liberal economic system was supremely desirable and the only possible basis for a free and progressive society, for international collaboration and peace. But the almost inevitable trend was the other way. Social and psychological underpinnings of that beneficent system were being knocked out, and a democracy would not cling to it simply because it was *demonstrably* superior on national grounds to any alternative. What was in the offing was socialism of one sort or another. Yet, in whatever form, it would not offer the humanitarian and

economic benefits its proponents envisaged. Most likely the socialist states of the future would tend to be authoritarian rather than democratic, militaristic rather than peace-loving. In brief, a less dramatic and masochistic version of Orwell's 1984.

SOME OF THOSE PROPHECIES and fears appear today uncomfortably close to the facts. Some have, fortunately, been dispelled, at least so far as the West is concerned. The jury is still out on the most fundamental conclusions and prophecies of both Schumpeter and Hayek. Besides his professional judgment it was easy to see in Schumpeter's sardonic vision of the future, though advanced without any bitterness or passion, a strong sympathy for a "more civilised world," that before 1914, for the elegance and graces epitomised by Vienna of a bygone era. Yet it was not mere nostalgia or a cultured European's slighting of the allegedly barbarous Americans. He admired the strength and vigour of his adopted country: the War had been won in the main by the prodigious performance of the American economy. His civilised pessimism was a useful and challenging antidote to the already ascendant point of view that social and economic planning could perform miracles. Strong (and, as against the Keynesian persuasion, unorthodox) views did not make Schumpeter intellectually intolerant. He was an understanding advocate of those younger economists who, unfashionable in a different way, clung to Marx's economic apparatus. He relished intellectual dispute, conveyed the feeling that it should be conducted with wit and culture rather than with pompous evocation of alleged eternal verities and social priorities. Economics appeared not as a dismal but an elegant and graceful science.

Harvard nearly a century ago. After two generations of experimentation, most serious educators recognized that this smorgasbord or cafeteria approach to curriculum planning scarcely assured young people of the broad general education they need. Harvard and other colleges turned back 30 years ago to more coherent theories of general education. But the enemies of intellectual seriousness are once more going strong and with none of the restraints such as grades, written examinations, departmental majors and intellectual traditions which prevailed in President Eliot's day.

Many, though not all, students are delighted. Most young Americans are extraordinarily verbal. Instead of written examinations, they would naturally prefer to be judged on the quality of their class participation. They rarely know what is in their own intellectual best interest for the whole of their lives. They would much rather talk about homosexuality or the new wave in film making or the urban crisis than study irregular French verbs or calculus or the Treaty of Utrecht. There is nothing wrong with discussing sexual mores or movies or the urban crisis, but that is what students have bull sessions for and why they read newspapers and magazines. It is not why they go to college.

THE RESPONSIBILITY LIES with the administration and the faculty. The intellectual devitalization which has ruined many good high schools across the country is now spreading rapidly into the colleges. The result can only be a swelling tribe of New Barbarians, armed with college degrees and glib phrases but ignorant. If many parents are uneasy, they have good reason.

William V. Shannon
in the NEW YORK TIMES

OTHER NAMES COULD be cited, yet the three I have given convey much of the flavour of education at Harvard, and undoubtedly at many other leading universities in the America of the time. There were other excellent teachers, some more popular with the students, some much better known outside the academic world. There were also teachers who were just competent and/or dull. There were also, as there are bound to be, windbags, people superficial in their lectures, shabby in their scholarship; and worst of all, there were already lecturers who were both superficial and popular.

Yet the tone of the place of academic life in general was set in the type of concerns and approach which emanated from the men I spoke of (at least in so far as the area of the social sciences is concerned, though I am pretty sure a

student of humanities or science of the period could offer similar examples for a similar lesson). But the fact that they were in the social sciences, the area which was to grow inordinately, probably excessively, in popularity as the field of study for undergraduates and graduates alike, underscores the contrast between then and now. Students today are supposed to take courses of current and pressing interest and importance and to seek out young and dynamic instructors with whom they can communicate.

Those three were certainly not young, could not (with the exception of Schumpeter) be described as dynamic as the term is currently understood; the difference of age and background interposed a barrier to that close communication and frequent contact which is supposed to be of such great importance in education. They were certainly courteous, easily approachable and helpful, but would have been devoid of that impulse that has of late prompted many an elderly and sometimes a distinguished professor to embrace vociferously what he conceives to be the Cause of Youth. A certain degree of distance does not imply lack of sympathy, often quite the contrary. Respect for accom-

plishment and age is not a sign of repression but of maturity and a civilised mind.

THIS WAS NOT the golden age of the American university but what could then be viewed, with some justification, as a promise of one. One could hope for—and one did see—a rapid diminution in snobbery, stuffiness and prejudice which had afflicted the Eastern academic establishment. The university was emerging from a period of penuriousness, shedding both its parochialism and the inferiority complex *vis-à-vis* the European models. The current, often choleric, dispute as to whether those were Good or Bad Old Days, like all such exercises, misses the point. Because we deplore the new evils does not mean that we long for the old ones any more than by being opposed to pollution we want to bring back the conditions when tuberculosis and polio were widespread. And so the real choice is not between the turbulence, agitation, and violence on today's campuses and yesterday's apparent detachment from society's problems, its preoccupation with fraternities, sororities, and clubs.

Familiars

Mary's little lamb follows her
at the daylight gate
at the curfew hour

by the lane, by the briar
foxglove bells the wood
dead-nettles on the wicks
white mutes on a stump

what is it casts a light
so farrandly?

hawk on the barn door
flittermouse in the brown air
or the Crizum child
to the cross worlds nailed?

with stick and stake
with Mary's white lamb
with the hawk's claw
with Leird like a lion
with Tib and Tyffin
Fancy and Ball

at the daylight gate
at the come home hour

borne away with the bell
with water run backwards
the red bell flower

Michael Mott

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THEATRE

Letter from Paris

From "1789" to "1793"

By Henry Popkin

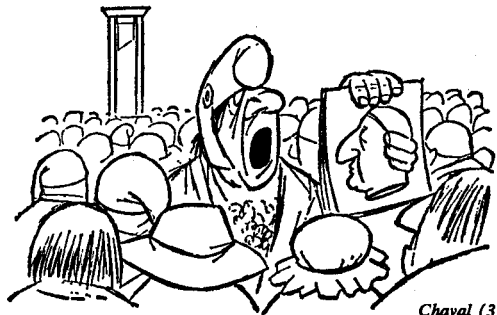
ARIANE MNOUCHKINE's Théâtre du Soleil has at last staged its sequel to *1789*, and the disappointment in *1793* is general. In *Nouvel Observateur*, Guy Dumur, an enthusiast for *1789*, finds that the sacred words of the people express "a kind of *angelisme*" which recalls dramatists of the Stalin era. As for the method: "One cannot, under the pretext of turning one's back on the theatre, repeat for three hours the same things with the same techniques of staging." Another old admirer of *1789*, the critic of *Le Canard enchaîné*, voiced a general objection when he observed that, instead of "participating in a movement of history," he has been "attending a history lesson." Even one of Madame Mnouchkine's most steadfast defenders, Emile Copfermann in *Travail théâtral*, concedes that she has "perhaps" sacrificed the image to the word.

Perhaps, forsooth! Where *1789* was full of action, *1793* is full of talk. In *1793*, the Revolution is of course being "betrayed", but we do not see any of the crucial steps being taken; we only hear about them. The characters talk about the dreadful things that are happening, but, invariably, they are far distant from the arena of political action. Essentially, the trouble with *1793* is the trouble with the French Revolution itself, which began as a popular movement but became separated from its origins. Power became concentrated in the hands of a revolutionary élite. The most important events directly befell them, and only secondarily reached the people. Surely the way to adjust theatrical method to this change would be to show more of the individuals who made history, to show Marat once again but also to put Robespierre, Danton, Hébert, and Jacques Roux on the stage. What could be more dramatic than to show the active hostility of the successful revolutionaries, Marat and Robespierre, to Roux, an earnest but hapless outsider, or even to put on the stage the denunciation of Roux delivered (but possibly not written) by Marat's widow, Simone Evrard? It would be too

much to expect from *1793* anything as witty as Richard Cobb's remark that poor Roux was only a genuine friend of the people in lower-case letters, not a *Friend of the People* like Marat, or his observation that Robespierre could not comprehend Roux's concern for feeding the people because there was nothing about the need for bread in the annals of the Roman Republic. But we ought to have at least some indication that Madame Mnouchkine's three heroes were not in perfect militant harmony. Instead, she simply quotes any one of the three whenever she wants to show the people absorbing some elevated sentiments.

While Marat and Robespierre keep Roux in check, while Charlotte Corday assassinates Marat, while Robespierre builds the power structure that will enable him to destroy Hébert and Danton, the focus of *1793* continues to favour less powerful people, in particular the inhabitants of the Parisian *Section* of Mauconseil in Les Halles. (Mauconseil is a curious choice; Albert Soboul, a sympathetic historian of the *sans-culottes*, singles out the *sans-culottes* of Mauconseil for calling in outsiders to circumvent the popular will of their district. Nothing quite so brazen is recorded of any other *Section*.) We can be sure that grand political and historical principles have compelled Madame Mnouchkine to limit her drama in this way, to banish the great men because, in her analysis, they do not count. Brecht, following similar principles, created a powerful portrait of a war in *Mother Courage*. But Brecht wisely did not require his little people to retail correct opinions on all subjects—and he even permitted them to *do* something once in a while.

HARDLY ANYONE EVER does anything of consequence in *1793*. Midway through the play, the people burlesque, with characteristically grotesque humour, the guillotining of Louis XVI; nothing before or after is so vivid or so theatrical. Only in this episode and in two incidents representing profiteering shopkeepers does *1793* have any of that play-within-a-play element which was



Chaval (3)

such a prominent feature of 1789. The authenticity of 1789's popular play-acting was asserted by Irving Wardle in *Gambit* and questioned by John Weightman (ENCOUNTER, December 1971). Marvin Carlson's *The Theatre of the French Revolution* (1966), which is the standard work on the subject, has not a word on any theatrical activity of this kind. In Carlson's account, pro-Revolutionary theatre tended to be allegorical and divorced from immediate reality. At any rate, Madame Mnouchkine has not, to my knowledge, insisted upon the authenticity of her plays-within-a-play in 1789, and she has practically abandoned this technique in 1793.

AS THE DRAMATIC ACTION of 1793 moves from one to another of the three platforms of the playing area, it roughly alternates between a revolutionary council and a gaggle of women of the people. The councillors fret over the foreign powers that have taken arms against the Revolution, sing the hymn to Reason, recite the Constitution, and, incidentally, get a round of applause by asserting the Right to Rebel. The women act out their altercations with the shopkeepers, but, more typically, they talk, write letters, eat apples, tear bandages, read Marat, weep for him, and ask why the peasants in the Vendée have turned counter-revolutionary. An illiterate learns to make out Marat's name, and thereafter she brightly proclaims: "I can read Marat!" None of this is irresistibly theatrical.

Distortions of history in 1793 are instructive, but perhaps I should try to defend 1789 against a charge levelled by John Weightman, who complained that the September Massacres had been ignored. Soft-peddling the September Massacres is the peculiar function of 1793, where a narrator briefly summarises the massacres, asserting that the people marched to the prisons "to do justice" and, carried away by their anger, went on to kill some non-political prisoners as well. Who could guess from this tidy account that most of the victims, fully three-quarters in fact, were non-political—debtors, thieves, prostitutes, and other ordinary criminals who were killed at random by the mob?

We also get a brief, and equally odd, summary of the taking of the Tuileries. A character says: "... I had to walk over the bodies of my massacred brothers. There were a thousand dead. ..." Actually, there were 1,200 dead, but only one-third of them were revolutionaries. Nothing is said of the hundreds of the Swiss Guard who were killed while trying to surrender or of the sixty who were executed after being taken captive. Now, I know that there were atrocities on both sides and that you have to break eggs to make an omelette and all that, but isn't it too late in the day to pretend that the French Revolution was a costume film starring Errol Flynn, in which the good guys never do anything bad?

Equally strange is the account given of the storming of the Convention and the arrest of the Girondin deputies (2 June 1793). A character tells us that the crowd acted because "the Assembly did not defer to the wishes of the people." There might be some question as to whether that Parisian crowd accurately represented all of France, including those who had elected the Girondins. The people, we are told, demanded certain reforms, including "establishing the price of bread at three sous a pound. The Assembly resigned itself to obeying the

people. The union of the Mountain and the *sans-culottes* had borne its fruits." But did this actually happen? According to Georges Lefebvre (*The French Revolution from 1793 to 1799*, p. 54): "The sans-culottes . . . were left empty-handed." The conclusion of Norman Hampson (*A Social History of the French Revolution*, p. 181) is more specific but equally cheerless:

As it was, the Convention failed to honour the promise it made on 2nd June to create a Parisian revolutionary army, and petitions for general price controls (*maximum général*), a purge of all noble officers, the arrest of suspects and the arming of the *sans-culottes* all went unheeded. The *enragés* must have felt that they had pulled the Jacobins' chestnuts out of the fire for them.

Is it necessary to add the comment of George Rudé (*The Crowd in the French Revolution*, p. 122): "There was nothing said, for the moment,



about food prices, but the Mountain had achieved its immediate aims"? Earlier, Rudé reports that the price of bread had been set at three sous a pound for Paris in March. Then, in May came "the first law of the Maximum which controlled the price of bread and flour throughout the country." The next significant measure of national price-control came in September, but it was not a direct result of the events of 2 June.

A little before the fall of the Girondins, Madame Mnouchkine's *1793* shows some *sans-culotte* women compelling a shopkeeper to sell soap at a lower price. One of them describes an instance of mob action to reduce the price of soap, an occurrence closely resembling a story told by Rudé (p. 125). But the incident Rudé describes and the soap riots themselves occurred *after* the arrest of the Girondins. Why does Madame Mnouchkine fiddle with chronology here? Obviously, because we are supposed to think that the mob action at the Convention and the arrest of the Girondins produced a kind of Utopia. How could there be soap riots after the new political alliance "had borne its fruits"?

But even the best of Utopias must come to an end. *1793* concludes with these words:

On 5th September, construction workers and armament workers leave their jobs and assemble in the Place de Grève; united with the *sans-culottes*, they will obtain the *maximum général* of prices.

It was the last great popular victory of this revolution.

On 9th September, the Committee of Public Safety forbade the continuous meetings of the Sections and thus broke the movement of the *sans-culottes*, the *avant garde* of the people. In the months to follow, five hundred thousand men will leave for the frontiers.

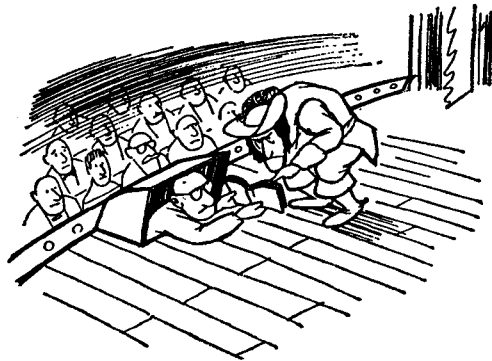
It hardly matters that Hébert, the chief instigator of the demonstration of 5 September and its immediate beneficiary, is not mentioned; after all, so far as *1793* is concerned, Danton did not exist either. But, from this passage, which would one think came first, the enactment of the *maximum général* of prices or the limitation of the Sections to two meetings a week? Curiously enough, the limiting of the Sections came first. Then on 29 September, after the *sans-culottes*, from whom we are to believe all blessings flowed, had lost their power, national price control became law. True, the speaker says "will obtain," but his words are misleading—no doubt because they are intended to be.

THE CENTRAL MESSAGE is clear: "Citizens, it is necessary to make terror the order of the day." *1793* consistently endorses revolutionary violence, however casually it may be motivated. The slaughter of members of the Swiss Guard striving

to surrender, the September massacres, and the Reign of Terror are all equally admirable. Happily, not all revolutionaries take quite so bloodthirsty a view, and an instructive contrast is to be found in, of all things, a recent Soviet play. This piece, written to commemorate the anniversary of the Russian Revolution, represents Lenin's colleagues arguing over the measures they must take following an attempt on their leader's life. Krestinsky pleads vigorously and successfully for the harshest, most violent action. Can there be anyone who sees this play who does not know that Krestinsky became the victim of his own principles? Not only was Krestinsky a victim of Stalin's Show Trials of the 1930s; he is one of the very few prominent victims to have been posthumously exonerated. To show the tragic peculiarity of Krestinsky's position is to exhibit an adult understanding of the consequences of revolutionary violence. Madame Mnouchkine and her collaborators are back in the nursery, tearing teddy bears apart and howling for blood.

IT SEEMED to me that *1789* was a masterpiece of theatricality, making good use of a theatrical technique so novel and so exciting that directors are vying for the distinction of having used it first. Was Ronconi the first to have sent his actors scurrying in and out among an ambulatory audience in his *Orlando Furioso*? True, *Orlando* got to the public first; but Madame Mnouchkine maintains she was already working along those lines when *Orlando* had its première. Peter Brook used this technique in *Orghast: Part Two* at Shiraz last year, and his associates confide that he started it all, before Ronconi, with his experimental variations on *The Tempest* at the London Roundhouse a few years ago. Whoever did it first, this method does work remarkably in *1789*, especially for those playgoers nimble enough to get out of the way of the onrushing cast.

Even the historical distortions of *1789* are



more acceptable because of the play-within-a-play-acting. What was Cagliostro doing dancing with the Queen? History has provided Madame Mnouchkine with a cop-out. The affair of the diamond necklace created some false impressions concerning Cagliostro's *entrée* to court circles, and folk actors pretending to be court people were entitled to share in the confusion. So long as the distortions are filtered through the popular mind, this principle can be made to work. If the facts are wrong, we must ask—how could the People have known?

But, in 1793, the play-acting is virtually abandoned, and so it is not the common people of the time conveying their honest confusion about chronology. Instead it is the Théâtre du Soleil itself misrepresenting history, twisting events and turning dates upside-down. What a discovery to make about a play that *Le Canard* called "a history lesson"! If anything, it is a history lesson in how to rearrange history!

Theatricality is less abundant in 1793, and not only because words have taken precedence over action. The production uses only three platforms instead of five. And the audience of 1793 con-

tributes less to the general excitement. At 1789, every square inch of the Cartoucherie de Vincennes seemed filled, and one had to keep one's wits about one to keep from being trampled by the actors or one's fellow spectators. Some early arrivals found seats overlooking the action, but most stood or walked or ran throughout 1789. The nightly crowd was estimated at 1,500, and that seems about right. Now, however, at 1793, the fire department has posted a sign forbidding the presence of more than 700. (Quite right, too, from a practical standpoint: the place was a fire trap.) And so I missed the thrill of the crowd. I missed the authentic impression of a real political event, where it is impossible to fight one's way through the crowd for a good look at the speakers. Gone were the excitement and the danger and even the inconvenience of having to stand throughout: seats tended to be available as they were needed.

And so, if 1793 has prompted a new view of 1789, it is the conclusion that 1789 was fundamentally a stunning work of theatre and not of politics. Now that theatricality has vanished, all that remains is a threadbare political mystery.

A Slight Wind Makes

A slight wind makes the two yellow flowers
peck at each other like fighting roosters
in a Mexican yard.

The bird, red-breasted, drops quick
and nervous to peck at seeds
they may have dropped.
There is no one position favoured
by the bird or flowers.

The flowers, tied to the same stalk,
would seem committed to pattern,
until the wind now stops now turns them
upon each other.

As for the bird. Quick-black eye, hop,
back feathers spread and shut, hop, beak
quick to snatch whatever only it can see,
hop, quick before the invisible vanishes,
quick before the wind turns the flowers
to Mexican vipers.
Quick, before the world comes to an end.

Theodore Halaki

NOTES & TOPICS

Helsinki Notebook

By Eugène Ionesco

I ATTENDED the recent international meeting of UNESCO or the "inter-governmental conference on cultural policies in Europe." The discussions lasted some ten days; there were hundreds of delegates, civil servants, and administrators from every country in Europe; there were plenary and special sessions. Commissions and sub-commissions, and then still other sub-commissions, met and drew up report upon report, piling up mountains of paper. *Mais qu'est-ce que la culture?* Since nobody thought of attempting a definition of culture the discussions were all the more passionate, contradictory, and chaotic.

One thing only was understood, on all sides—"culture" is an object somewhat difficult to handle, ambiguous and dangerous, somewhat suspect, rather multi-directional, something which must be guided and kept under control. It was understood that it is produced by scientists and by artists, particularly dubious characters. Although it was more or less possible to agree about what a scientist is, it was found impossible to define the notion of an artist. But it was also understood (or thought to be understood) that culture could be something of a weapon in the hands of politicians and administrators.

SIMONE WEIL thought that culture "is an instrument wielded by professors in order to produce professors who in their turn will produce professors..." Nowadays culture seems to be an instrument wielded by functionaries to create functionaries who will create functionaries. In reality this is (as Simone Weil well knew) the very reverse of culture. In fact, as Alain tells us, culture is not easily transmittable—to be "cultured" means going back to the source and "drinking from the palm of one's hand and not from a borrowed cup..." But, for civil servants and administrators, culture is a well-ordered filing-cabinet of traditions. Westerners are conservative; and culture only exists, Bachelard used to say, "to the extent to which contingencies of knowledge are eliminated." For others it is an ideology, or a religion, or a form of thought, or a simple formula, to be imposed by governments on the governed.

Nobody present at Helsinki seemed to want to understand that true, living culture is creation, break-up, change, evolution and even revolution. From West to East—or from South to North—culture seemed to be something official, the daily bread of the bureaucrats, the monopoly and the weapon of totalist politicians.

I HAVE IN FRONT OF ME the draft report of a commission on the two principal themes of the day: the Role and Position of the Artist in European Societies, and the Training of Cultural Administrators (or *animateurs*). The latter, says the draft report, constitute the object of a dialectical type of reflection which has long occupied "all those who are responsible for thinking out cultural policies and implementing them." And who are those dialectical fellows responsible for thinking out cultural policies and implementing them? Politicians, of course, and bureaucrats. Even if the notion of "artist" is for them as confused and contradictory as that of "culture", the functionaries seem to be in agreement in thinking that artists should be investigated, looked into or looked after, for it is the artist in particular (more than the scientist) who "causes embarrassment."

The artist is considered to be a kind of minor, and must at the very least be supervised. No one here has ever thought of asking the artists' opinions about the role and position which they themselves believe they occupy in European societies and cultural institutions.

Care should be taken (says the report drawn up by the delegates from a number of worthy nations) to "avoid" any recurrence of the phenomena of "isolation" or the conditions which allowed "the development of an individualistic art of art for art's sake"—the "exaggerated individualism" of "the activity of a few artists and writers who encourage violence and war..." So, sound or not, here already are words of command, instructions and guidelines for the world of art.

BUT ONE THING seems to have been overlooked. Great theories of violence and war (whether they are justified, or not, is another problem) appear as indispensable movers of history, and have famous protagonists: Marx, and Lenin, and Brecht. *Mein Kampf* may not have been the work of an artist (unless he was *un artiste raté*), but only the work of a political ideologist. Yet Tolstoy and Dostoevsky and Solzhenitsyn and Pasternak speak to us about love, just as Dickens and Claudel do; and what Zola deplores is clearly poverty and lack of love. Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides and Homer have dealt with conflicts,



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battles and wars: but they did so in order to deplore them.

The Commission, however, continues to think very seriously about the "inevitability" of a flight by the artist towards Art for Art's Sake at the very moment when he is "entirely free to express himself." In other words: mustn't he, once again, be kept under more or less close supervision? It is the Commission, that is to say civil servants and politicians, who imagine it is their duty to decide this. Although certain delegates appeared to remember that it is impossible to live in a society and not somehow to express it, it did not seem to enter their heads to ask themselves if power is really the *authentic* expression of society, if it is not "outside" or "on top", if it is not indeed the *oppressor* of society.

A NEW EXPLOITATION of man by man and a new alienation seem to be looming dangerously near—the exploitation of artists by bureaucrats, who would be the employers and bosses of the creators who would become converted into the disseminators of their official thoughts and the hawkers of their ideologies.

And what are these ideologies, these doctrines, these traditions? Precisely those which were originated by revolutionary thinkers and creators at certain periods of history, necessary for those periods, finally assimilated by the establishments of the day—and how late in the day!—once they had become museum ornaments.

And if, as the Draft Report states, there is a "dialectical" relationship between the Artist and Society, this dialectic signifies precisely opposition. For creators to work for civil servants who think for the creators seems to me totally perverted, all the more so because the pawns, bureaucrats and politicians, do no more than repeat what other creators, at other times, have conceived.

The regimentation and direction of culture is a tempting and dangerous thing. On the Western side it looks as though our bureaucrats are doing this in a more liberal, if also a more insidious and more hypocritical way than those of certain other countries, which, with their rough and heavy boots, can be seen to be on the march.

A CREATOR, although he can be alone, is never "isolated." It is he who, consciously or unconsciously, expresses the needs, desires and truths which most people still find obscure but will recognise in the end. The essential thing is that the functionaries should not direct but protect and guarantee their creative "independence"—the absolute liberty of the creator. Otherwise mediocrity will triumph, followed by oppression and a wasteland. This is what an

artist really is: the creator or inventor of new worlds, the discoverer, the water-diviner. He must question organisation, society, culture, civilisation itself.

Can you imagine what would have happened if Joyce, Kafka, Proust or Flaubert had been asked not to be "asocial", if Marx himself had been asked not to be "the enemy of society," if the truth of Galileo had not embarrassed, if Rimbaud and Artaud had not questioned the fundamental problems of our existential condition?

I was furious when I saw and heard at Helsinki all those delegates and delegations, all in collars and ties, discussing full stops and commas, full of complacency and mediocrity, submerged by paper, trying to direct what they could not understand—the drama of existence, the human tragedy, the problem of ultimate human ends.

All this—anxiety, faith, despair, hope—had been desiccated, locked up in hope-chests, put in cultural cans—spurious wealth and base solutions, and above all obstacles in the way of truth and life. They should be following and listening to the creators; the creators should not be listening to them.

AT THE END of the congress I mentioned to a senior official of UNESCO that a Soviet woman delegate had reproached a writer from her country for having cast a slur "on the dignity of the Russian people", but that in reality he had not done so. I pointed out jokingly to this important French functionary that if all the writers of France who had "attacked" their country were arrested, half of French literature would be in prison. The senior official replied drily that as far as he was concerned, he could see "nothing very wrong in that. . . ."

Voilà! This is how the Chairmen of Culture truly feel, those who want to direct creators. Haven't I been saying all along that all they want to do is lock us all up?

I should say that the French minister for cultural affairs, Jacques Duhamel, was perfectly aware of the dangers into which "misunderstandings" and bureaucratic and political appetites might lead; he understood perfectly the intellectual importance of what was at stake. But he thought that the dialogue, full of "ambiguity" as it was, might finally be "worthwhile." Culture has a chance. But M. Duhamel is a courageous optimist. I should like to believe he is right.

IT MAY BE TRUE that UNESCO can help to diffuse literacy and to aid humanity. It may well do so, though inadequately. But, for the time being, let us be on our guard. UNESCO has ambitions, and its pride makes other demands. Let us reject all so-called cultural policies from all our governments.

The Clergyman & the Guerrilla

A Conversation with Dr Philip Potter—By PETER SCHMID

"THE CLOSER we come to the Cross, the closer we come to each other." The speech in which the 50-year-old black theologian from the West Indian island of Dominica rendered thanks for his election as Secretary-General of the World Council of Churches was an avowal that social commitment is a fundamental Christian duty: "To live, not in the love of power but in the power of love. . . ." By placing a representative of the Third World at its head in succession to the Dutchman Visser 't Hooft and the American Carson Blake, the World Council lent symbolic emphasis to a series of politically involved resolutions which have provoked fierce controversy: the call for an economic and financial boycott of South Africa and other racialist régimes; the doubling of the half-million dollars with which the Council is backing the African guerrilla wars of liberation; and the appeal to President Nixon to cease bombing dikes in North Viet Nam and withdraw all US troops by the end of 1972.

Potter—the great-grandson of a slave whose son rose by dint of hard work and intelligence to become a landowner and married a white woman—grew up in the racially relaxed atmosphere of the West Indies and was not personally confronted by the problems of racial discrimination until he went to study in England. "The impact was all the stronger," he confesses. "It is significant that most of the Black Power leaders, from Frantz Fanon to Stokely Carmichael and Malcolm X, come from the West Indies. . . ."

—*Dr Potter, is there a link between your election and the decision to step up financial support for the guerrilla war of liberation in Africa?*

DR POTTER: I hardly think so. The decision was taken in principle years ago, first at Addis Ababa in January 1961 and then at Canterbury in 1969. The world simply ignored it at first and did not sound the alarm until it became definitely known which groups were to receive the money. Wrongly so: they may be guerrilla fighters, but the funds are used for specific purposes such as education

and exchanges of information with each other and the rest of the world. In any case, the sums involved are very small.

—*Do you exercise any kind of control over the actual disbursement of these funds?*

DR POTTER: No, it's a question of trust. You won't get very far with people unless you trust them.

—*Do you extend this trust to Christians only, or to adherents of other philosophies or ideologies as well?*

DR POTTER: Many of these groups are actually of Christian origin—in fact, many of their founders are clergymen. But the most important thing in every case is the trust we bestow on them, the feeling among these people that they are receiving a token of solidarity from the world, and especially from white people. It endows the Gospel with credibility in their eyes because they are, after all, being oppressed in the name of Christ. Vorster, the Portuguese, and Ian Smith all claim that their goal is to preserve Christian civilisation.

—*Does that imply that the Church now feels obliged to abandon its spiritual mission in order to take up a political one?*

DR POTTER: Assertions of that kind are based on the peculiar notion that spiritual efficacy is not political. What is the meaning of politics, if not a grappling with the problems of society? and what governs the life of society? Basic structures, values and attitudes which are deep-rooted in nature. That is why one cannot, as people so often do for the sake of convenience, draw a line between the spiritual and the political.

—*But surely there are differences between the methods employed in fighting for or against these political and spiritual structures? Wouldn't it be more legitimate for the churches, instead of backing an armed struggle, to attempt to bring about a spiritual transformation—for instance, by rousing the oppressed to an awareness of their immortal humanity—or the oppressors to an awareness of their responsibility towards fellow-Christians? Has the Church of Christ crucified the right to thrust a sword into the hands of rebels?*

DR POTTER: We are arming no one. We are simply making these people aware, in a very concrete way, that their humanity is respected by

DR PHILIP POTTER is the recently-elected Secretary-General of the World Council of Churches. PETER SCHMID lives in London and is an editor of "Die Weltwoche" (Zurich).

the rest of the Christian community even if all other forces are in league against them. By means of this solidarity, we are preventing the hatred from becoming too bitter when the inescapable moment of conflict arrives. We are thus imbuing their struggle with a sense of responsibility. By participating, we are becoming partners in a dialogue. Besides, these people aspire to the liberation of man *qua* man, not merely to black liberation. In other words, anyone who behaves inhumanly to another human being becomes inhuman himself, so the liberation of the victim signifies the liberation of the white oppressor as well.

—For all that, shouldn't the Church's goal be to change and reconcile enemies rather than to further the victory of a cause which it proclaims with righteous assurance to be the just one?

DR POTTER: The situation in South Africa does not date from yesterday, but is the product of a long process of development. The Church was on the spot and missions operated there, but they took good care not to provoke the ruling powers even when these were manifestly evil. Even today, these régimes are buttressed by their military and economic cooperation with the USA and European countries, *e.g.* also with Swiss financial interests. It is the Church's duty to remind these countries of the burden of guilt they are assuming by participating in oppression. That is a spiritual and a political task—there is no difference between the two. Because two suicidal wars have taught the Europeans nothing about their attitude towards their fellow men, the Third World is compelled to take its destiny into its own hands just as the Christians of Europe did when fighting Hitler.

—But did they fight as Christians?

DR POTTER: I make no distinction between Christians and citizens, and that is precisely the problem besetting the Europeans. They have led a double life in which the Christian element is neatly detached. In a true Christian, it should pervade his whole existence.

—But why does the World Council of Churches confine itself to seeking the mote in the eye of white racialists and find it barely worth mentioning such massive beams as the brutal expulsion and despoliation of Asians in Uganda or the interracial massacres in Burundi?

DR POTTER: We have taken careful note of these things—in fact at Utrecht we did condemn the events in Uganda. However, the worst racial

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discrimination is that of the whites in South Africa because of the forces underlying it: colonialism, imperialism, and economic exploitation. The most shocking aspect is that it is perpetrated by nations with a Christian background. Where Uganda is concerned, you should examine the role played there by Indians with British Government support. You may then derive some understanding of this brutal conduct on the part of a nation which has only just gained its independence.

—Does your magnanimous forgiveness also extend to another country where persecution directly concerns the World Council of Churches—I mean, because it is religious, not political, in character and affects members of churches which are themselves represented on the Council? I refer to the muzzling of the Russian Orthodox Church, large numbers of whose places of worship were closed during the 1960s, whose recruitment of priests has been forcibly curtailed, and whose tolerated clergy are harnessed to the propaganda of a godless state. Worse still, what about the Baptists, who even today share the lot of the intellectual opposition in forced labour camps and insane asylums? Isn't this religious persecution of Soviet Russian Christians of more urgent concern to the churches than political and social discrimination in Africa?

DR POTTER: We make no distinction between religious, political and social persecution. We certainly concern ourselves with the lack of religious freedom in Communist countries, in so far as it is proven. On the other hand, it makes a great difference whether one is dealing with régimes which profess themselves to be Christian or with those which openly profess atheism, those whose entire structure and constitution are anti-religious and anti-Christian. Moreover, we have to tread carefully in Eastern Europe for fear of endangering the Christian communities there still further. Our condemnation of South Africa was not a bolt from the blue, either. We have for years been trying to mitigate the policy of *apartheid* by means of calm and patient discussions with the authorities. Our mode of procedure in East European countries is quite similar, but discrimination is far harder to prove there than in South Africa, where it is practised openly. We therefore have to run a careful check on all the facts that come to our notice. . . .

—Can you manage to do so at all?

DR POTTER: It's far from easy, but we do more in Eastern Europe than is generally known, except that our methods differ. . . . There's another

aspect of the matter. What credibility would attach to our endeavours with the Communists if we didn't put our cards on the table in cases where a dialogue is possible? But of course, we don't protest against racialism solely to earn the right to talk about religious persecution. We do so because we must, and hope that it will have an effect on the other dialogue.

—In other words, because Christians are subject to a higher responsibility you beat the Western breast—self-accusingly, to some extent—whereas the Communists, from whom no decency can be expected in view of their depravity or perhaps original sin, get off virtually scot-free. Isn't this rather like the judge who sends little middle-class petty criminals to the gallows and lets compulsive murderers go free because he can't expect anything better of them? . . .

DR POTTER: Let's put it this way: the Christian cannot evade his responsibility. The Communist has a different responsibility of his own—one with which, by the way, I utterly and completely disagree.

—Is this double standard in any way connected with the fact that the Kremlin has delegates inside the World Council of Churches and its administration by virtue of Russian Orthodox membership?

DR POTTER: No. If you compare our line prior to 1961, when the Russians joined, with that pursued since, you will see that it has not changed at all.

—How strongly is Russia represented in the World Council of Churches?

DR POTTER: There is only one Russian delegate and one member of the administration. Orthodox Russians are represented on our committees like all other churches and enjoy exactly the same voting rights. They are only one church among 252. For instance, they have five votes in our 120-strong Central Committee, plus two Baptists, or seven Soviet Russian representatives in all. Large churches make do with proportionately fewer representatives than smaller ones, in keeping with the spirit of Christian brotherhood. Even in the General Assembly, only 20 of the 800 delegates are Russian.

—May I revert to anti-racialism? I have often heard it said in Africa that Christianity is a colonialist religion, not only in its capacity as the religion of the White Masters but also, and in a deeper

sense, as the symptom of a different mentality and tradition. In Japan, too, the only thriving church is a movement which combines the mystical emotionalism of the Pentecostal community with Nestorian and, thus, with Buddhist and other traditional religious elements. Would it not be consistent with the anti-racialist attitude to promote a more universal transformation of the Christian message—not only an external but also an internal adjustment to the pluralism of world traditions?

DR POTTER: The emergence of independent African churches, or the growth of the Pentecostal community in Latin America, actually stems from the alien nature of the missionary churches in those areas. They should really seek to become genuinely rooted in the culture of the countries concerned. That is a problem which we are busily discussing in the World Council of Churches—how the churches can be rooted in regional culture yet simultaneously form part of a world-wide movement and be mutually responsible. Not that we simply open our arms to everyone. That would be syncretism. It is significant that Latin American sections of the Pentecostal community feel the need for membership of the World Council of Churches because they have been greeted there with respect. We, in our turn, can learn from their spontaneity. . . .

—But the Pentecostal community in Chile, for example, which I know quite well, flatly rejects the sort of political commitment to which the World Council of Churches attaches such urgency. . . .

DR POTTER: No, no, the Pentecostals of Chile voted for Allende in droves. That is the peculiarity of their dual nature, also in Italy. They're deeply devout on the one hand, and convinced socialists on the other.

AT THIS POINT, Dr Potter glanced at his watch and excused himself—sorry, he had an appointment with Mr Blake. A pity. I should have liked to tell him about a simple sermon I heard in the vast new Pentecostal cathedral at Santiago. Its theme: Allende's much-vaunted *hombre nuevo*, the revolutionary "new man." Isn't the whole point of Christianity, ran the mystically simple message, that a new man can only fulfil himself, not by social legislation, but in an inward sanctification? Somehow, it seemed to me, that unsophisticated preacher came closer in his elementary rhetorical question to the ultimate religious phenomenon than all the dialectical minds of the World Council of Churches, whose striving for social reform puts the cart before the donkey, on the journey to Jerusalem.

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BOOKS & WRITERS

Stendhal's Mirror

By Laurence Lerner

PROBABLY THE MOST FAMOUS statement of the realist creed is Stendhal's: "*Un roman est un miroir qui se promène sur une grande route. Tantôt il reflète à vos yeux l'azur des cieux, tantôt la fange des borbiers de la route.*" He wasn't, of course, the first to use the image; but when the Renaissance critics spoke of holding the mirror up to Nature they didn't think in terms of such radical fidelity, such complete rejection of literary conventions, as the great 19th-century realistic novelists. And Stendhal's fiction is full of marvellous examples of the ruthless vision of that travelling mirror that shows the blue skies and the mud—Fabrice hearing the noise of those retreating from Waterloo, like a stream flowing non-stop the whole night; Lucien being pelted with mud by the mob; Julien screwing up his courage to seize hold of Mme de Rênal's hand.

Of course a debate has been going on ever since about whether realism is really realistic. On the one hand, formalist critics tell us that realism is a convention like other conventions: one man writes his dialogue in heroic couplets, another writes it in monosyllabic grunts, and the difference is purely one of aesthetic function. "Where we think we see 'realism'," said Curtius of medieval literature, "we are dealing with a literary convention: the low style." Not observation but decorum told the writer how to put it.

That is the one extreme; and it seems to me obviously wrong. Certainly there are derivative realist writers, as there are derivative writers in every school, and no doubt when they thought they were depicting life they were often copying Stendhal, or Hardy, or Hemingway; but unless you grant that realism was a movement that looked at the world with a new attentiveness then you had best drop the term, since you are not admitting that it means what it says. Formalists, damn them, are usually right, but at too

high a price—the price of leaving out why, to most of its readers, literature matters. Realism mattered, as a movement, because it was primarily an aim, not a series of techniques.

Mr Bateson knows this. He knows it so clearly that he swings to the other extreme, and denies that realism can be literature at all.¹ There isn't as much dissent in his essays as their title claims, but the last one of all, called "The Novel's Original Sin", is opinionated in the extreme: it maintains boldly that the serious novel, whose death is so often lamented, *ought* to be dead. "I regard the novel *per se* as an inferior art form, one hopelessly vitiated by an internal technical self-contradiction." This contradiction turns out to be realism. A novel sets out to give us a recognisably faithful picture of the life of its times—that is, it is a kind of social history—but at the same time it is fiction. "The contradiction could hardly be more complete: the untrue masquerading as the true!"

Well, it's always worthwhile being presented with the arguments for total rejection; it concentrates the mind wonderfully, as with a deep breath we try to defend what we had forgotten needed defence. We begin, of course, by picking and choosing details in the attack: we can tidy up Mr Bateson's case by removing its weak points.

For instance, to illustrate the reader's confusion in not being "certain whether he is looking at painted grapes or real grapes," Mr Bateson asks, "Is an autobiographical novel to be read as autobiography or as a novel?", and illustrates from *Sons and Lovers*. "When Paul wins the first prize in the winter exhibition at Nottingham Castle, are we to treat this as historical fact (D. H. Lawrence had after all been an undergraduate at Nottingham University, and he was also a painter of some talent), or as an episode in the career of the fictitious hero?" And what of the curiously implausible friendship between Paul and Baxter Dawes? "In terms of the necessary and probable, I do not believe in the episode," says Mr Bateson; but if it is *autobiographical*,

¹ *Essays in Critical Dissent*. By F. W. BATESON. Longman, £2.75. *The Scholar-Critic*. By F. W. BATESON. Routledge, £2.

"a reflection perhaps of some ultimate reconciliation between Lawrence and Frieda's first husband—I shall have to believe in it." I pick on this point because Mr Bateson is such a persistent critic of the doctrine of the Intentional Fallacy, which he seems here to show the need of by his curious misunderstanding. Surely no reader has ever had the slightest difficulty in knowing that Paul's prize was won by Paul and by no one else. Mr Bateson is so good, at times, at illuminating literature by means of external material, that it is sad to see him make this elementary confusion between a novel and its source. And if the reconciliation between Paul and Baxter Dawes is unconvincing, then it will remain so whatever may have happened with Frieda's husband. An implausibility in a novel can never be defended by the assertion "It really happened," for that was in another world: by changing Professor Weekley into Baxter Dawes, the author may turn something that really happened into something implausible. True, we ought to check our feeling of improbability against some external reality, not just against what, as readers, we've learned to expect: the urge to do this is what issues in realism. But the whole of reality is there for us to use, we need not stick to the particular example that suggested itself to the author.

Mr Bateson's next criticism is more interesting. The novel is uneasy with symbols: they seem "forced, unnatural, an invasion from the territory of poetry." This is often true. I could do without the rainbow in *The Rainbow*, when the book's intense actuality is suddenly thrown away for cloudy uplift. The horses are better, though: we experience them along with Ursula, and to achieve a symbolic dimension Lawrence doesn't have to stop writing his novel. Mr Bateson offers quite a list of symbols he doesn't like in novels—the silver in *Nostramo*, for instance. That too is cloudy and moral at times, but at other times astonishingly real, great heavy ingots that can sink a boat, mined, transported, loaded furtively to keep them out of the rebels' hands. Symbols in fiction don't have to be unreal; it is astonishing how often the great realists can give a further dimension to something that takes its place with complete authenticity in their world. Even Stendhal, whose mirror shows only what was actually on the road—how worried his young men are about whether they're going to fall off their horses. Real falls off real horses—yet how much it tells us about their need for dignity, for control, for the mastering of energy, for cutting a good figure. There are symbols that can meet the real on its own terms.

But however much we tidy up Mr Bateson's attack, we have to move to his central point,

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and we have to say that it has a certain compelling logic. Art is not life; how, without loss, can it pretend that it is? The answer is that it always has pretended. The artist has always been the one who replaces our brazen by his golden world; and all the centuries we've believed this, we have also believed that he holds the mirror up to nature. Beauty is boring unless we feel it is, after all, about the real world. The realists were not unaware of the nature of art; they were giving the pendulum a rather harder shove than ever before, away from beauty, towards imitation. Of course the novel is "fiction posing as fact", but where Mr Bateson sees that as contradiction I see it as paradox, and indeed the basis of the novel's greatness.

THERE IS A certain resemblance between Mr Bateson's position and Geoffrey Hartman's in "The Heroics of Realism".² He too doesn't believe that mere brute life can be art. "Forms are a betrayal of life": hence they are necessary. (Mr Hartman calls his collection *Beyond Formalism*, but "beyond" doesn't imply rejection; the truer your understanding of form, he believes, and the truer your allegiance to it, the better you will transcend the apparent limits of formalism). Only the writer who is restrained by form, held at a distance from sheer experience, can perform the significant act of breaking out of it. Mr Hartman is not worrying here about the classical realists whom Mr Bateson aimed at: they had social and rational norms that kept them at a necessary distance from the flux of experience. He is concerned with the impersonal modern novelist who, by not allowing us to perceive his judgment on his characters, could be accused of not being able to handle his world—if it were not that his mode of distancing himself is not that of judgment but that of creating heroes. Modern realistic fiction, threatened by the all-engulfing democratic embrace that Whitman used to boast of, stands back and becomes art by means of its attachment to romance and myth.

Such at any rate is my account of Mr Hartman's suggestive but maddeningly elusive argument. If I have understood him right, then I rejoice to concur. If Stendhal was in danger of turning art into mere life, how much more is beat poetry or the fiction of the inarticulate. To attack form and insist on plain reality can, at a

given moment of literary history, be exhilarating because of the tearing sound as it breaks free of a convention that had clearly begun to lie. Art *turning into* life can be marvellous, as in Wordsworth, Stendhal, George Eliot. But then, when it's happened, we have to step back again, take our distance, perceive in a structured way—if only for the sake of being able to break out again.

Alan Swingewood declares himself a disciple of Lucien Goldmann; and since Goldmann offered us another version of realism, I will try and relate Mr Swingewood's discussion to the fountainhead.³ Goldmann claimed to see parallels between the structure of economic life and contemporary literary manifestations. The parallels, as he develops them in his *Introduction aux problèmes d'une sociologie du roman*, don't strike me as very illuminating, but his claim that he has departed from traditional literary sociology is far more interesting. Both Marxists and non-Marxists, he claims, have looked at the consciousness of the social group that produces a literary form, and then have seen the literature as an expression of that consciousness; he suggests a short cut—that social reality may be transposed directly into art, without passing through the stage of group consciousness. The critic will then explain the structure of a literary work by showing its analogies with (its homology to, in Goldmann's terminology) the economic life that it reflects. Surely this is a theory of realism. There goes the artist, carrying a mirror down the road, and not even able to tell us what it reflects. Literary expression precedes intellectual formulation.

Goldmann is so enmeshed in abstraction that if we want examples we had better go to a follower. Mr Swingewood offers us three essays in the sociology of the novel: one on Fielding, one on alienation in Sartre, Camus and Nathanael West, and one on Orwell. They are all intelligent and, indeed, illuminating, but they certainly do not confirm Goldmann's theory.

The essay on Fielding shows that his outlook is not that of the bourgeoisie but that of the gentry. This undoubted truth will surprise few, but it was worth showing as a counter to oversimple theories that insist that the novel is a bourgeois form—though perhaps these theories could make a comeback by asking whether Fielding really did anything for realism, as Mr Swingewood assumes he did. Richardson, who clearly is bourgeois, seems to belong so much more to the future of the novel that I feel that Mr Swingewood, if he really is a disciple of Goldmann's, should have discussed him instead. Christopher Hill's essay on *Clarissa*, for all its faults, does see Richardson as struggling to

² *Beyond Formalism: Literary Essays 1958-1970*. By GEOFFREY H. HARTMAN. Yale University Press, paper, \$3.45, £1.65.

³ *The Sociology of Literature*. By DIANA T. LAURENSEN & ALAN SWINGEWOOD. MacGibbon & Kee, £2.75.

articulate values that were not yet fully present to bourgeois consciousness. But Fielding, as Mr Swingewood rightly tells us, uses the notions of birth and honour to organise his novel—tried and familiar notions, that had long been present in the consciousness of his group.

AND TODAY? No one is sure whether realism is over. As Mr Hartman shows, and as Erich Auerbach showed even better, much of modernism is realism carried further than ever. Yet it is a rejection, too, of the classical realist fictional world, and Mr Swingewood explores this rejection in his essay on "Alienation, Reification and the Novel." It is a perceptive essay, for Mr Swingewood reads novels well and thoughtfully, but I don't see that it could be called an essay on the sociology of literature.

Roquentin, Meursault and Miss Lonelyhearts are all ill at ease in their worlds; so we can call them all alienated. But what sort of term are we using if we do so—psychological, religious or Marxist? Are we describing the state of feeling of the heroes, or its social cause? Are we naming something specific to the post-realist novel (and therefore corresponding to something in 20th-century society), or something that crops up continually in the history of literature? These are the questions for a sociological approach, but no one ever answers them. Let's take the last. "Joyce, Musil, Hesse, Gide, Sartre, Camus and West," says Mr Swingewood, "are novelists whose world is deeply problematic and whose art reflects a crisis of values. Goldmann has argued that this crisis of values emerges only with the development of a capitalist society... where market values dominate literary values." If I wanted to be unkind, I could emend to "Goldmann has asserted." And is he right to assert it? There are certainly writers in earlier literature whose world is deeply problematic. There is Elizabethan melancholy: was Hamlet alienated ("What should such fellows as I do, crawling between earth and heaven?"), or Lear ("kill kill kill kill kill kill")? There are the self-torturings of Puritan spiritual autobiographies: Bunyan spent years in mental agony because he had allowed himself to *think* of abandoning his Saviour. There is the sustained and helpless introspection of S  nancour, the melancholy insanity of Cowper. None of these has anything to do with capitalism, or arose in our market society, so the procedure to follow is obvious. Works from different societies must be compared so that we can decide if there are significant differences between them according to the society they were written in; then we must describe these differences; and only then should we ask if the Marxist concept of alienation describes

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one set better than the others, and if so, which. I think I know what the answer would be; but for the moment all I am concerned to say is that literary criticism doesn't need to answer this question, but the sociology of literature does.

EVERY REVIEWER is torn between describing the books he is reviewing, and writing an essay on some issue that they raise. I have settled so shamelessly for the second that I ought to conclude with a few words of general appraisal of these three critics. Mr Bateson has a lively but inconclusive mind: he is very good at raising questions, especially about the relation between literature and the world it emerges from, or ways of studying it; but his analogies are often unhelpful and his arguments start well and, somehow, never finish. And he ought not to have published both these books: the amount of overlap between them is so great that a reader

who bought both would think, with justice, that he had been cheated. Mr Hartman is a man of even greater learning, whose mind never keeps still, so that the very subject he is writing about seems to change from sentence to sentence. "The Heroics of Realism" is almost the clearest essay in this book: many of the others are totally opaque. I read him with a kind of bemused admiration, but to learn anything from a critic I need to understand a rather larger fraction of what he says. Mr Swingewood should not have collaborated with Diana Laurenson, whose chapters are generalised waffle of the most inaccurate, vague and commonplace kind. He has written an opening methodological survey, which has some straightforward text book virtues, and these three lively unsociological essays.

But if you really want my advice on what to read in order to understand the relations between literature and society, I suggest *Le Rouge et le Noir*.

Unhappily Ever After

On Ford Madox Ford—By ALLAN RODWAY

YES, IN A SENSE, Ford's is "the saddest story".¹ For all his talent and teddy-bear charm as a man, his gifts and endeavour as a writer, he never quite made the grade. The acknowledged "maître" of Conrad and Pound ranked, and still ranks, below his pupils, whether in prose or verse, despite recurrent attempts² by many eminent writers to "boom" him to what he too thought his rightful place, the top. His life, so to speak, was a fairy-tale rewritten by Thomas Hardy, in which the Bad Fairy's curse prevailed to the end. Everything he touched turned, not to lead—which might have released him from the spell—but to *silver* (with one teasing exception). He was not an *ugly* duckling—quite the contrary—but he was fated always to see himself as a swan. And how hard he tried to be one!

The innate literary gift is undeniable. He could sit down, as Mizener reveals, and off the cuff

dictate a literary article needing no revision. He boasted of being able to construct a sonnet on given rhymes within two and a half minutes, and did in fact regularly beat eminent poets at this party-game. At a ship's concert he offered to make limericks on passengers' names within thirty seconds. No one can tell which bits of Conrad's *Nostromo* are the ones filled in by Ford; and if their collaborations read seamlessly it is largely due to Ford's adaptation to Conrad. Moreover, Ford paid more attention to the craft of literature than anyone but James. No doubt Conrad developed the use of time-shift and point-of-view further, but it was under Ford's influence that he did so. From Ford too came the idea of the dramatic novel, composed in crucial scenes, the "*progression d'effet*", and the "exhaustion of aspects." Pound, and through Pound Eliot and Yeats, developed—sometimes rather paradoxically—the idea that poetry should be at least as well-written as prose. But who taught Pound?

Pound's FAMOUS COMMAND . . . must have been inspired by Ford. . . . I heard someone ask him about Yeats's later style. "Oh," Ford said, "I used

¹ *The Saddest Story: A Biography of Ford Madox Ford*. By ARTHUR MIZENER. Bodley Head, £5.

² *Ford Madox Ford: The Critical Heritage*. Edited by FRANK MACSHANE. Routledge and Kegan Paul, £4.50.

to tell Ezra that he mustn't write illiterate poetic jargon. Then he'd go to Yeats and say the same thing." This was tossed off with such flippant finality that I was sure it was nonsense. Years later, however, Pound told me the same story. He said too that Ford actually lived the heroic artistic life that Yeats talked about.³

Ford's reading was enormous, his taste rapid and unerring. Towards the end of his life he could write a study of literature from Confucius up to date. Not literary history but cross-cultural and cross-chronological criticism. *The March of Literature* was typically full of factual errors, but its judgments were based on enthusiastic reading in Latin, Greek, French, Provençal, Italian, Spanish, and German, as well as English; and where he had to depend on translation he got in touch with men who could command the classics of those languages in the original. During the year of Ford's editorship *The English Review* was incomparable in quality (though disastrous financially), despite the fact that he regularly lost manuscripts and did most of his editing in a cab

or at the music-hall it was taking him to. Among many already famous names, he published the unknown D. H. Lawrence after glancing at the first paragraph of "The Odour of Chrysanthemums." No doubt with equally independent good taste, he turned down the contributions of several critics—and later paid the penalty.

And how hard Ford worked! Eighty-one books (only thirty-two of them novels), 419 contributions to periodicals, and fifty-seven miscellaneous contributions to other men's books. . . . For better for worse, in sickness or in health, harassed by neurosis, debtors, women, enemies (the worst of whom was himself), he toiled at literature all his life, for little thanks and scant reward.

With all this, it remains an open question whether he ever achieved greatness. Certainly his admirers have not quite succeeded in thrusting greatness upon him, and it is doubtful if Mizener's and MacShane's excellent and complementary books will do so either—though they should encourage, respectively, a sympathetic and judicious re-reading of his best novels and poems.

Perhaps the fatal flaw lies in the fact that,

³ Robert Lowell, *Critical Heritage*, p. 266.

NINE LIES ABOUT AMERICA

Arnold Beichman

Foreword by Tom Wolfe

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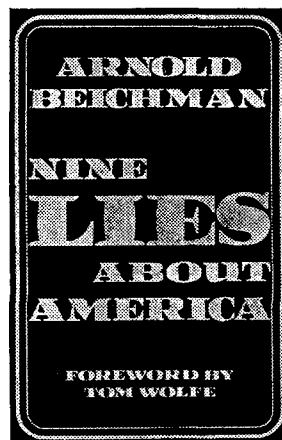
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whether or not Ford himself was born great, he was born in the shadow of greatness, and was expected to emulate it—an expectation not thought to be furthered by his childhood habit of retreating to the lavatory when the unconventional, artistic Great descended:

In middle age Ford remembered his childhood as oppressive. "... by sheer reaction of inheritance," he wrote in 1920, "I had even then (1900), an absolute hatred for the 'toll-loll' Great Figure, the Quarterly Reviewer, the Bibliographer, and the ceaselessly mouthing Great Poet. . . ." He had greatly disliked the outlandish style imposed on him by the principles of his elders (a memory that did not prevent his making a strenuous effort to impose equally unconventional opinions on his daughter, Julia, when the time came). He was dressed in a "suit of greenish-yellow corduroy velveteen with gold buttons, and two stockings, of which one was red and the other green," and his yellow hair was kept in a pageboy bob that hung below his shoulders "as a token of my Pre-Raphaelite origin." . . .

Francis Hueffer was, according to Ford, not an overly severe parent, but he was an earnest one. . . . The one thing Ford never forgot was his oft-repeated observation that Fordie was "the patient but extremely stupid donkey."⁴

The result? Compensatory vanity, a desire to be an orthodox, respectable English gentleman (hence the transmutation of his advanced, Froebel-style school into Winchester, or sometimes, Eton), and a desire to enter the civil service (an ambition that provoked his grandfather, Madox Brown, to exclaim "God damn and blast my soul! . . . I will turn you straight out of my house if you go in for any kind of commercial life.").

Ford never threw off the effects of his early upbringing, hard though he tried, and consequently got the worst of all possible worlds. In pursuit of a persona he became a Catholic but, as it didn't quite fit, neglected churchgoing and violated many of the Church's tenets; he set up as a Tory—but of an extinct kind—and as a gentleman, but was a boaster, a liar, and quite without honour or sense in money matters. He wished to be respectable but—just as it's the unprepared respectable girl who tends to get pregnant—succeeded only in being condemned for hypocrisy. Taking an old-fashioned churchly line about chastity and marriage, he found himself deceiving his wife with her sister, and attempting to get a divorce in order to marry another lover, Violet Hunt, who was eleven years his senior and afflicted with tertiary syphilis—even, in fact, pretending he *had* got a divorce, in Germany. There was another side to Ford, of course: his

charm, his sympathy and psychological understanding, his generosity, his selfless dedication to literature, his readiness to help young writers—somewhat marred by rent-free loans of villas, in desirable but distant parts, which turned out to exist only in Ford's wishful imagination.

More than anything else it was this lifestyle that caused his literary style to be unjustly depreciated. Mizener argues convincingly that it was nevertheless precisely the divided personality responsible for that life-style which was responsible for the merits of his best works: *The Good Soldier* (1915) and the Tietjens tetralogy, *Some Do Not . . .* (1924), *No More Parades* (1925), *A Man Could Stand Up* (1926), and *Last Post* (1928). True, but it seems arguable too that it was also responsible for certain demerits that must, by the highest standards, deny Ford the final accolade.

He allowed himself to become Chestertonian in outlook as well as figure; but his style hasn't the latter's witty surface-appeal to render the absurdity of content acceptable. On the contrary, a Jamesian subtlety of discrimination and obliqueness of method—complicated by the same carelessness about factual details that his theory of "impressionism" encouraged in his life too—often make his work superficially slow and rather hard to follow; and it is usually written too fast for it to offer James's textural reward for diligent reading; Ford's craft shows rather in structural cleverness. In that sense, he is a novelist's novelist.

Mizener claims that Christopher Tietjens has "all the characteristics of the man Ford imagined himself to be." Ford himself disclaimed responsibility for the Tory opinions of Tietjens. The two statements are not quite incompatible, and neither is strictly relevant to the worth of the fiction. What is relevant, is that Tietjens is sometimes not only outmoded but outright ridiculous, yet the narrator's irony about him is always romantic irony: really directed at the bad new world rather than the old-fashioned gentleman who is too good for it. In terms of popularity, such lack of severe critical discrimination might not have mattered; but the 1920s was just the wrong time to back this particular horse, or rather, steed. Christopher's commitment

to the ideals of the Edwardian ruling class; his extravagant rectitude in matters of money, of women, of duty; his systematic persecution by the world; his secret longing to be an Anglican saint; his gradual transformation during the war from Tory younger son to Tory radical prepared to go underground to preserve the Tory values.⁵

struck no sympathetic chord in the following decades; and he is a far cry from today's pop hero. Of course, Ford's own reaction against a

⁴ *The Saddest Story*, p. 5.

⁵ *The Saddest Story*, p. 370.

Bohemian upbringing indicates that the present permissive and protesting generation may even now be promoting a mass option for stability in the next. It seems unlikely, though, that it will follow Ford sexually, even if it inclines his way politically. Chastity, marriage for the sake of continuing conversations, show no signs of making a comeback. And this points to another small weakness in Ford: his novels, even the best, are rather passionless, his work

has little emotion; it is life portrayed through thin emotions but distinguished intellect—a life where people observe rather than feel things. What intensity it has is nervous and intellectual intensity.*

The oblique method, then, of presenting the action at two removes from reality, "through the consciousness of a character whose consciousness is described by the narrator" (Mizener), was probably an invention that came naturally to Ford. He seems to have been somewhat under-sexed, attractive for and attracted by quality of mind, and taking it for granted that reality is finally not the event itself but the conception of that event in a consciousness. Now, devices deriving from such a temperament pay dividends in the way of apparent objectivity (that can yet be combined with narrational irony and judgment), three-dimensionality, freedom of range within unity of structure, and so forth. The method also has its price—as Theodore Dreiser saw long before Wayne Booth. . . .

If ever Ford actually became a swan, touched his life and turned it to gold, it was in *The Good Soldier*. Normally, his gift itself, his very facility, betrayed him. Like Keats, he found writing to come all too easily, and like Keats too, in a time of great stress, he wrote his masterwork—slowly, with blood and tears. As he had done before, he split himself into two characters, Ashburnham and Dowell, his persona and his personality perhaps, but for once did not idealise one of them (though Mizener seems to indicate that he intended to idealise both). The result is a Jamesian charting of labyrinthine dooms; of dark passion within imprisoning politeness, subtle treacheries of conscience and concupiscence. Unhappily for Ford, where he succeeded once James succeeded several times, and did so earlier. Dreiser, anyway, thought it a good book despite the method not because of it, and would presumably have licked James into shape as he did *The Good Soldier*. His viewpoint is probably still unfashionable (. . . "begin at the beginning . . . not at the beginning as some tertiary or quadrutary character in the book sees it"), but well worth

* Mary Colum, *Critical Heritage*, p. 96.

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considering. Even where there is a Rosencrantz or Guildenstern, it remains an open question whether the story of *Hamlet* is better told from his point of view, or Hamlet's, or by an omniscient narrator. Where there is no such "tertiary character", as in the Tietjens tetralogy, Dreiser's account of the cost seems less curmudgeonly, and may add one more item to those that seem always to have swung the balance against Ford:

A story may begin in many ways . . . once begun, it should retain one's uninterrupted interest. This is not the case in this book. The interlacings, the cross-references, the re-re-references to all sorts of things which subsequently are told somewhere in full, irritate one to the point of one's laying down the book. . . . Every conversation which should have appeared, every storm which should have contained revealing flashes, making clear the minds, the hearts, and the agonies of those concerned has been avoided.⁷

In other fields, too, Ford's great merits have never been quite sufficient to still adverse criticism. Though much of it was unjustified—merely a reaction to his life-style or even his earlier, German, name—some was not, and it tended to give warrant to the rest. Pound was quite right in saying that Ford's criticism was nine years ahead of his time, but his indifference to mere facts was undoubtedly a flaw in "the best critic in England." Pound also thought his poem "On Heaven" "the best poem yet written in the 'twentieth-century fashion'," and the quotations in his review, of 1914, do not contradict the judgment (*Critical Heritage*, pp. 63–9). But surely Robert Lowell's later judgment is the better:

Yet he himself as a poet was incurably of the nineteenth century he detested, and to the end had an incurable love for some of its most irritating and overpoetic conventions. . . . He is Pre-Raphaelite to the heart. Their pretty eloquence, their passionate simplicities, their quaint neo-Gothic, their vocabulary of love and romance, their keyed-up Christianity, their troubadour heresies, and their terribly over-effective rhythms are always peeping through Ford's railway stations and straggling free verse. . . . His revolt is brave and resourceful, but the soul of the old dead style remains to hamper him. . . . Even such an original and personal poem as "On Heaven" is forever being beguiled off the road . . . but in "Champêtre," "Temps de Sécheresse" and "Coda," Ford finds the unpredictable waver of his true inspiration. In these reveries, he has at last managed to work his speaking voice, and something more than his speaking voice, into poems—the inner voice of the tireless old man, the old master still in harness, confiding, tolerant, Bohemian, newly married, and in France.⁸

Perhaps, after all, the Curse was really a Mixed Blessing and Ford a swuckling.

⁷ Dreiser, *Critical Heritage*, pp. 48–50.

⁸ *Critical Heritage*, pp. 266–7.

“You Orientals!”

Kazantzakis' England—By PAUL THEROUX

“AND WHAT’S MORE,” says Nikos Kazantzakis in *England*,¹ speaking of Englishmen travelling, “wherever they go, even the most backward, distant country, they are able to settle down comfortably, because everywhere, they carry England with them.” But this is true, in varying degrees, of more people than the English. Consider the yams in Brixton market, the Bank of Baroda in Southall, or the exclusive American supermarket/PX at the U.S. airbase in Ruislip. Like the *bidet* in the Congolese hotel, it indicates who is living—or who once lived—close at hand. All immigrants are colonists in the sense that they carry something of their national culture with them: ideas of comfort, religion, business and appetite are part of their luggage, you might say. The travelling Englishman’s first act in the distant country was to give definition to the new landscape by naming—or re-naming. In Malaya he found an agreeable place and called it the Cameron Highlands; he remembered a king or an explorer or a trader on a road sign, and in front of his own verandah’d bungalow put up a board saying “Hillcrest” or “Cluny Lodge.” It is an English trait—the colony, a blank landscape waiting to be dramatised with names, gave this passion full vent—and part of the comfort Kazantzakis speaks about derived from the familiar names. After the naming came the rituals and institutions, the club, the church, the school, the team, the drama group—English enthusiasms, enclosing and protecting the community. To seek admission to these was to seek to be English.

Kazantzakis was surprised and delighted by a great deal that he saw on his visit to England in 1939; much he found alien and strange; Sheffield (and the “appalling, depressing” “grime-stained” cities of Birmingham, Liverpool and Manchester) “pained” him:

... faces smeared with smoke; smudges of coal on naked girlish legs; factory after factory, all looking alike; horrid brick apartment houses; tormented expressions. The workers grave, severe, their eyes blue steel. This was the first and last time I would see them. But it was all I could do to stop looking at them.

He knew England through her literature, but he suggests that the literature had not prepared him for this horror (perhaps revealing a gap in his reading, an inexperience of the English novel). He read Shakespeare, “and this is the amazing thing—there is no human type so different from the Shakespearean hero as the contemporary Englishman.” Kazantzakis repeated that he was from Greece, a hot indolent place, and though Greece’s links with England have always been unique and strong, he thought of himself as an “Oriental.”

I sometimes think that we of the Oriental, tormented, pain-steeped ports, where the air has been permeated with desires for thousands of years, are like crafty old men going to the innocent, barbarous, ephebic North, our eyes forever seeking, greedy, yet slightly tired and derisive, as though knowing everything. The races of the Orient are old ladies, heavy and primordial.

It is almost an English assessment of a particular kind of foreigner. And Greece is not far away. East Africa and Singapore are farther, but for a person like myself who has lived happily in these former English territories, England is not a strange place; it holds no terrors and few disappointments; a visit is like a return. Then, one must conclude that the English were more than successful in carrying their country abroad, for the England they carried was understandable to me, an outsider. If I had a surprise on arriving in England it was the unexpected confirmation of the accuracy of the literature and a convincing justification of reminiscences I heard in tropical bars. I had doubted certain things. I found descriptions of English sunlight and spring flowers hard to believe; I tended to think that a man’s memory of a particular rural landscape exaggerated colour and emptiness, and could not help but feel that behind every English hill was an English factory belching smoke, and that the English people I knew overseas were escaping to a suitable climate or else castaways from that rainy island who had chosen to live in a fantasy of Englishness that was permitted in a cut-price colony. If the memory was not falsified, and the literature was accurate, why should the Englishman travel so far? Why not go home? The answer is in the small East African settlement, the club, the church, the school, moved intact from

¹ *England*. By NIKOS KAZANTZAKIS. Cassirer, £1.90.

the mother country and offering protection. It is also something very different from this, a factor Kazantzakis doesn't mention: the Englishman's appreciation of foreignness—he has produced a whole library of the literature of expatriation. That appreciation is like another distinctly English trait, the pleasure in coping with adversity—hostility in awful climates—as real in the fenced-off compound in the tropics as in Britain during the winter power cuts when the householder's mood was curiously triumphant.

THE ENGLISH SENSE of order, the result of an habitual reflex rather than a systematic decree, gives the impression of a tremendous solidity and balance. It was carried abroad and it reassured those who could enter into it. English attitudes travelled without changing much, and to a large extent this accounts for some of the Englishman's isolation. The English overseas are accused of living a rather narrow existence, but the point is that they associate themselves deeply with a locality; in this sense all Englishmen are villagers. It shows in the special phrases they use when they are away, among "natives" or "locals."

"We've lived here for donkey's years, but we've never been invited to one of their houses," says the Englishman, adding, "Though we had them around to tea."

"They're very secretive and awfully suspicious," says his wife.

"They seem very friendly, but they're not interested in us. They lack curiosity."

"They keep to themselves."

"An odd lot. I can't say I understand them."

You might think they are talking about Kikuyus or Malays, but they aren't. They are Londoners who moved to Dorset eight years ago and they are talking about ordinary folk in the village. I knew the locals: I was neutral—just passing through, stopping for five months. The locals had strong opinions on outsiders who had settled in that part of Dorset.

"They come down here and all the prices go up," one old man said. He might have been a Kenyan, speaking of settlers. There were other objections: the outsiders didn't bother to understand the village life, they kept to themselves, acted superior, and anyway were mostly retired people and not much use.

Expatriates and natives: the colonial pattern repeated in England. There was a scheme afoot to drill for oil on a beautiful hill near a picturesque village. The expatriates started a campaign against it; the natives said very little. I raised the subject in a pub one night with some natives of the area, asking them where they stood on the oil-drilling issue.

"That bugger —," one said, mentioning the

name of a well-known man who had lived there for some years and was leading the campaign. "I'd like to talk to him."

"What would you say to him?" I asked.

"I'd tell him to pack his bags and go back where he came from."

So one understands the linguistic variations in England, the dialect that thickens among the natives when an expatriate enters a pub. No one recognises him; the publican chats with him; the talk around the fireplace is of a broken fence or a road accident. The expatriate is discussed only after he leaves the room: Where does he live? What does he do? The natives know the answers, and later when he buys a round of drinks they will warn him about the weather ("We'll pay for these warm days!"). It is a form of village gratitude, the effort at small-talk. But in England a village is a state of mind. "Are you new in the village?" a friend of mine was asked by a newsagent. This was in Notting Hill.

IN OUR OWN DAY the peasants have almost disappeared from England.... The few peasants left are silenced and terror-stricken." If Kazantzakis meant countrymen, rustics and workers on the land—or if he gave them more precise occupations (thatchers, crofters, shepherds)—he might have looked closer and seen them. Sheep-shearing is still an annual springtime event in much of rural England, even if it is not so festive as in Act IV of *The Winter's Tale*. Kazantzakis steered clear of farms and small villages, though he appears to have been a house-guest at the manor of some titled people in what is now the Green Belt. For the most part he stuck to large cities and travelled on the main thoroughfares that connect them. He was enthralled by London and saw much of its charm in the fact that it is a "work of chance." The industrial cities of the midlands and north nearly undid him, and the four cities I mentioned previously he called "the four great circles of hell." Though he was careful in describing each city, he depended on apocryphal stories for his condensed English history, and one wonders how precise his eye was for racial characteristics. In the London streets he saw "centuries, clearly reincarnated in the highly diverse passersby... Viking giants... day-dreaming Celts... Norman gentlemen... ancient Iberians, restless and rapacious," as well as "kindhearted Saxons with their athletic flesh, their short bull-like necks, and the everlasting pipe wedged between their broken teeth." He saw no other races. His attitude is like a kind of commitment.

The English were candid with him, but the candour Kazantzakis reports seems as unEnglish

as the rhythms of their speech—though the strange and pompous effects are undoubtedly a result of the speech having been turned into Greek and back again into English. One young man told him, "I've never been interested in analysing the various bloods flowing through my veins.... It's enough to have them flowing regularly and strongly. In case they ever vie among themselves, no one should learn of it." And another cried at him, "Can you understand me, you descendant of Themistocles?"

Only once did he have a conversational setback. He was at the country house attempting to talk to "two bony girls."

"Have you read Demosthenes?" I asked them with provincial naïveté just to see their reaction.

They both burst out laughing.

There was a gulf between us and I felt an unexpected bitterness, as though I had been left behind and the young people had passed me by. I felt ashamed of having read Demosthenes once upon a time.

A number of people told him (and he showed signs of agreeing) that the English are devoid of imagination. They meant it as praise and quoted Cecil Rhodes, saying, "The world belongs to the English because they have no imagination." Kazantzakis found the English tough, prosaic, self-absorbed, polite, gentle, full of confidence and praising what is most homely. He met an old pensioner who discussed Shakespeare with him. The pensioner said that Shakespeare gave "a humane and characteristically English ending... to his demonic life" when he "bought houses and land, and became the pillar and pride of the little town where he was born...."

It is an unusual judgment. Kazantzakis did not dispute it. He indulged in a whimsical sally, comparing the dead Shakespeare's unwritten tragedies to the unhatched eggs you find in the entrails of a chicken you've just killed. "The pensioner shrugged his shoulders, and out of politeness refrained from making a reply. These Orientals! he must have been thinking to himself."

KAZANTZAKIS took the English at their own assessment. In a nation of sweet-eaters he met only wine bibbers. Where is the rebel, the complainer, the shy egotist, the crank, the conspirator, the hobbyist? Kazantzakis' single encounter in this direction was with a Scottish Hindu who told him a very long story about Vivekenanda, and he maintained that England's contribution to humanity (with the Magna Carta and Shakespeare) is the Gentleman. He means more than a polite person—he means someone comparable to the Italian *cortegiano*, the Spanish *hidalgo*, the French *honnête homme*. They are, all of them, vanished breeds; but this is not to undervalue the English character. Kazantzakis reacted strongly to

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England, and his opinions—always somewhat idealised—reflect a great deal of English influence. They could not, of course, take into account the war that was to alter the habits and social structure of the country. Yet what is clear from this dated, but valuable book, is that one must look in out of the way places, both on land

and in literature, for clues to the English character, and not all the places or books will be English in the usual sense of the word. Kazantzakis' England, the home of empire, where gentlemen read Shakespeare, was to change. But there was another England. The Greek, a classicist, didn't notice it. It remains unchanged.

A Squalid Charade?

Perils of Parliament & Congress—By ROBERT RHODES JAMES

ALTHOUGH there have been few occasions in their histories when the mechanisms of Parliamentary democracy in the United States and Britain have escaped strong criticism, it is a persistent complaint of the critics that all proposals for serious reform have withered and expired in the face of the implacable conservatism and narrow-mindedness of those who operate—and thereby profit from—those mechanisms. In response, advocates of the established machinery claim that the critics are ill-informed, intolerant, irresponsible, and wholly unaware of the delicacy of the balances which have been created over a long period of time and change.

The core of the current complaint in both countries is that the elector has no say in the conduct of his affairs between elections, a situation described by Winston Churchill in 1934 as "vague mass-driftings interrupted from time to time by spasmodic mob-votes", and that his affairs are being administered by an aloof and distant conspiracy. "The prerogative of power, once exercised by the monarch in person, is now exercised on her behalf by ministers", the authors of an excellent new comparative study of the British Parliament and the American Congress¹ remark of the situation in this country. The critic in both countries sees his position thus. He is given, from time to time, the choice of voting for one group of politicians or another. Small cliques scramble for office in a private battle in which the winner takes all, and in which cynical manipulation is followed by selfish oligarchy. The result, the critic claims, is a squalid charade of what the democratic process was supposed to be. Where, now, is the Social Contract?

There are profound dangers in discerning

similarities between the situations in the United States and in Britain, and Mr Bradshaw and Mr Pring are careful to emphasise the fundamental point that the surface similarities between Parliament and Congress conceal totally different concepts and experience since Thomas Jefferson wrote his celebrated *Manual*. The gulf in real power and influence which separates a back-bench M.P. and an active U.S. Senator is a very substantial one. And, although they rightly point out that "Debate in Parliament, unlike debate in Congress, is a constant exchange between the Government and the governed through their elected representatives" it is fair to note that debate is not synonymous with influence. Similarly, admirers in this country of the Congressional Committee system tend to underestimate the ritual nature of most of the exchanges and to overestimate the consequent influence upon the Administration.

The critic in each country has, therefore, two grounds for his disillusionment. First, the political parties themselves are monopolistic, too powerful, and concerned only with their own selfish concerns. And, second, that the nature of party power renders Parliament and Congress quite ineffective in controlling the Administrations. Thus, we are *led* into the Dominican Republic, Suez, Viet Nam, the Common Market, the abolition of capital punishment, and God-Knows-What-Else by political oligarchies who do not even bother to try to persuade the public or their representatives. "Why is it that nobody cares, outside these walls, about the rights of private members?" Lord Hugh Cecil demanded in 1901.

Because there is a deep-seated feeling that the House is an institution which has ceased to have much authority or repute, and that when a better institution, represented by the Cabinet, encroaches upon the rights of a worse one, it is a matter of small concern to the country.

¹ *Parliament & Congress*. By KENNETH BRADSHAW and DAVID PRING. Constable, £4.50.

Mr Patrick Gordon Walker^a has addressed himself with care and vigour to disproving the now fashionable thesis—advanced, among others, by Mr Richard Crossman—that Britain is being run by the Prime Minister and not by the Cabinet or Parliament. “The Cabinet in Parliament is a reality”, he writes. “The Cabinet dominates Parliament: but not simply by order of the Whips. The Cabinet is always conscious of the House of Commons and wary of it.”

The trouble with Mr Gordon Walker's thesis is that although it is undoubtedly generally valid, it does not—unfortunately—represent the whole truth. Cabinets tend to be acutely conscious of the views of their *own* supporters in the House of Commons, a situation that can hardly be elevated to a respect for the views of the House of Commons as a whole. Then, the recently available Cabinet records for 1937–40 dramatically emphasise the absolute domination of his Cabinet by Neville Chamberlain. Many of his predecessors—and by no means none of his successors—have manipulated their Cabinets with consummate skill, and with the same result. The Prime Minister, after all, distributes the offices, and although he has to accept some colleagues whom he dislikes and distrusts, the Cabinet in the main reflects his own personality, outlook, and experience. Very few modern Prime Ministers have found themselves in the hapless situation of Lord Rosebery. Would Mr John Davies have risen to such swift eminence in a Government headed by Mr Reginald Maudling? Would Mr Hugh Gaitskell have found house-room for Mr Crossman or excluded Mr John Mackintosh? No serious student of politics can accept that we have entered a period of Prime Ministerial rule, but it is dangerous to go to the opposite extreme.

IN THE UNITED STATES, the situation is infinitely more complex, and the degree of disillusionment with the political system is considerably more intense. To the critic, modern American politics at all levels often resembles little more than a hypocritically adorned racket, in which the mechanisms of democratic control over the Executive have proved totally ineffective, and where—in the words of Mr Bob Dylan—“money does not talk, it screams. . . .” The extent of moral and economic corruption in American public life is often wildly exaggerated, but the fact that a man of the character of the late Representative Mendel Rivers could be tolerated, let alone occupy a position of real power, is hardly a glowing advertisement and example.

^a *The Cabinet*. By PATRICK GORDON WALKER. Cape, £2.95, Fontana, 40p.

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The dispassionate observer can hardly avoid the conclusion that the critics of the mechanisms of Parliamentary democracy in Britain and the United States have a case, but one that would be considerably enhanced if they could devise a practicable alternative or suggest sensible measures of reform. It behoves all thoughtful people in public life in both countries to realise the strength of the disillusionment and hostility of the elector to systems which do not do what he expects them to do, and to consider how change can be achieved which is neither cosmetic nor destroys the very real value of institutions which have been created over a long period of time, and which have proved extremely durable. These two books demonstrate that the machinery is there, and is available; the problem is how men and women of sufficient calibre can be persuaded to enter public service seriously, and to make use of them. The elector increasingly believes that Whitehall, Westminster, and Wash-

ington D.C. regard him with an indifference tinged with contempt, and it is not to be wondered at that he responds in the same coin.

Here, therefore, is a very real problem, which must be surmounted if these institutions are to be respected and to be effective—and the two elements are inseparably linked. As Mr Bernard Holland wrote, over seventy years ago:

A strange ending, indeed, if the House which furnished a career to Burke, and Pitt, and Gladstone, should become an assembly of courtiers of power, proud of a servitude ennobled by the distinction of hearing the official discourses of under-secretaries, and adorned by the pleasure of entertaining ladies at tea on the Terrace on fine summer evenings.

It is in no way to disparage these excellent books to state that the erosion of public confidence in the democratic process in Britain and the United States is the most serious peril of all to the institutions which they describe with such respect and professional skill.

A Matter of Survival

By Anthony Thwaite

FOR A JEW, survival itself must be the true miracle. Whatever unique stigmata of suffering the Jew carries (Sholem Aleichem said: "the world envies us because we suffer"), simply to be alive is a bonus. Thus Dan Pagis in his poem "The Roll Call":

*He stands, stamps a little in his boots,
rubs his hands. He's cold in the morning breeze:
a diligent angel, who has worked hard for his
promotions.
Suddenly he thinks he's made a mistake: all eyes,
he counts again in the open notebook
all the bodies waiting for him in the square,
camp within camp: only I
am not there, am not there, am a mistake,
turn off my eyes, quickly, erase my shadow.
I shall not want. The sum will be in order
without me: here for eternity.¹*

Pagis, who is now in his early forties, spent part of his childhood in a concentration camp. Since 1946 he has lived in Israel, where he learnt Hebrew and is indeed now a professional scholar

of Hebrew literature. Nelly Sachs, on the other hand, was born in Berlin, lived in Germany until 1940 (when she escaped to Sweden), and always wrote in German. The same spirit is there, in "Chorus of the Rescued":

*We, the rescued,
We press your hand
We look into your eye—
But all that binds us together now is leave-taking,
The leave-taking in the dust
Binds us together with you.²*

Abba Kovner, a Russian Jew who fought with the Jewish partisans against the Nazis, has been an Israeli for more than twenty years and has always written in Hebrew. A few lines from his sequence "My Little Sister":

*As in a flood dammed too late,
they will come, come to the shore,
their hearts full of pity, to set
the survivors with swollen feet
in the book of chronicles,
to extend a brother's hand!
And they gave them a hand
in spite of their ugly smell.
And before heart and reason could separate
they cried,
and applauded them.²*

This overwhelming sense of survival in Pagis, Sachs and Kovner seems almost a sense of guilt,

¹ *Selected Poems*. By DAN PAGIS. Translated from the Hebrew by STEPHEN MITCHELL. Carcanet Press, £1.50.

² *Selected Poems*: Abba Kovner & Nelly Sachs. (Kovner translated by SHIRLEY KAUFMAN and NURIT ORCHAN; Sachs translated by MICHAEL HAMBURGER, RUTH and MATTHEW MEAD, and MICHAEL ROLOFF.) Introduction by STEPHEN SPENDER. Penguin, 30p.

comparable, in a strange way, with the post-Hiroshima and Nagasaki mood of some Japanese—a people with a similar sense of unassailable identity, and as a concomitant a widespread unpopularity, whose spectacular act of suffering twins them with the Jews. The gas-chambers and the atomic bombs are the 20th century's double emblems of guilt—for the perpetrators and for the survivors.

But the parallel breaks down when a third crucial element is named: Israel. For Yehuda Amichai and T. Carmi, Israel is the setting and centre of their work. Though Amichai was born in Germany, he moved with his family to Jerusalem before the worst of the Nazi oppression. What obsesses him is not the death camps but the Diaspora, not the sense of suffering but the sense of rootlessness:

*And my parents' migration has not yet calmed in me.
My blood goes on shaking at its walls,
As the bowl after it is set down.
And my parents' migration has not yet calmed in me.
Winds continually over stones.
Earth forgets the footstep of those who walk.
An awful fate. Stumps of talk after midnight.
An achievement, a retreat. Night reminds
And day forgets.³*

And along with this goes the realisation that, as Michael Hamburger says in his introduction to the Amichai volume, he "cannot take his language for granted . . . the language itself is an historical anomaly, like other languages that have not grown continuously and organically, but have been preserved, revived and modernised with a high degree of deliberateness." So Amichai writes of this tired language:

*Torn from its sleep in the Bible—
Blinded, it lurches from mouth to mouth—
The language which described God and the Miracles,
Says:
Motor car, bomb, God.*

AS NAOMI SHEPHERD has said, "The Bible is history, geography and literature in Israel," and the language of the Bible comes strangely filtered through poem after poem in all these books. To an Anglo-Saxon Protestant like myself, reading such parts of the Old Testament as Dr Fagan read to the assembled boys of Llanabba Castle ("a chapter of blood-curdling military history"), Amichai's Saul and David and Moses are strange anachronisms; and the name "Jerusalem" has a resonance, but is it the resonance Amichai intends? At times Amichai's intention and tone seem wholly secular, as in "The End of Elul":

³ *Selected Poems: Yehuda Amichai.* Translated by ASSIA GUTMANN and HAROLD SCHIMMEL. Introduction by MICHAEL HAMBURGER. Penguin, 25p.

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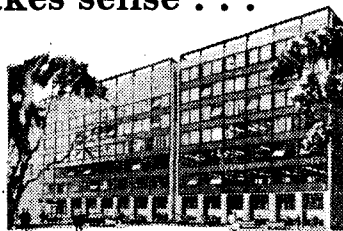
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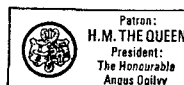
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*I'm tired. And curse the three Great Religions
Which won't let me sleep at night
What with bells and howls of muezzins and loud
shofars and noisy atonements.
Oh God, close your houses, let the world rest.
Why hast thou not forsaken me?*

But how seriously is one meant to take this? The poem is a mood piece, a gently humorous bit of hyperbole at the end of a long hot Israel summer; or so it seems. What Amichai appears to be is in fact a personal, whimsical, shruggingly charming poet, quite without the agonising of Pagis, Sachs and Kovner. Even his lack of roots is self-depreciatingly touched in, along with his lack of intellectual convictions:

*As for the world,
I am always like one of Socrates' disciples,
Walking by his side,
Hearing his opinions and histories
It remains for me to say:
Yes. Yes it is like that.
You are right again,
Indeed your words are true.*

Carmi is even further away from cataclysmic or eschatological concerns. As one might expect from a poet whose earlier work was done into English by Dom Moraes, he is sensuous, elegant, and also rather thin and beseeching:

*The windows are open,
and light-fish swim secretly into all our rooms.
Now they will nibble at the bait of our eyes,
and the fishermen will calmly laugh.
Flooded by twilight,
we will sink quietly in our rooms,
far from the help of the riverbank
and the fisherman's laughter.⁴*

What unites Amichai and Carmi is a sense of fable, or of anecdote shading into fable, that reminds me of Louis Simpson's more recent work: flexible, funny, sometimes with an almost surrealist arbitrariness. Amichai's "It's a Long Time Since Anybody's Asked" and Carmi's "Girl in the Closet" could as easily come from the hand of Simpson, and indeed there's an eclecticism about their work that quite often made me forget that I was reading Israeli poets in translation. Though Assia Gutmann's versions of Amichai come over more authentically than Stephen Mitchell's of Carmi, how can the non-Hebrew reader be sure what is authentic? Does anything bind all these poets together, welding them into a corporate Jewish voice? Nothing, I think, except the piercing sense that for them there was no final solution; and that is a fact of history, not a literary heritage.

⁴ *Somebody Like You*. By T. CARMI. Translated from the Hebrew by STEPHEN MITCHELL. Deutsch, 90p.

index

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A Scientist Replies

The Dangers of the New Zealots

By H. J. Eysenck

LAST YEAR I published a book on *Race, Intelligence and Education*—this appeared in the U.S.A. under the title *The IQ Argument*. Perhaps I should have been warned by the fate that befell Arthur Jensen. Perhaps I was optimistic in thinking that England was sufficiently unlike America to make reasonable discussion of fundamental problems possible. Clearly I was naive in thinking that emotional certainty could be touched by scientific evidence and rational argument. When the book appeared the roof fell in. The story is in some ways amusing, but it also has tragic overtones which ought to be taken as a warning; I hope to justify both statements in what follows. Obviously what happened to me personally is of little importance, and in any case was more diverting than frightening. I believe, however, that it has wider implications, and I propose to tell the story in order to bring out these implications. But before getting to the

H. J. EYSENCK is Director of the Psychological Laboratories at the Institute of Psychiatry of the Maudsley Hospital and Professor of Psychology at the University of London. He is editor-in-chief of an international scientific journal, "*Behaviour Research and Therapy*," and has contributed more than 300 articles to various scientific journals. Among his twenty published books are several famous Penguin titles which have sold in the millions of copies ("*Uses and Abuses of Psychology*", "*Sense and Nonsense in Psychology*", and "*Know Your Own I.Q.*") as well as "*The Dynamics of Anxiety and Hysteria*", "*Experiments with Drugs*", "*Crime and Personality*", and "*The Biological Basis of Personality*."

His most recent book "*Psychology Is About People*" has just been published by Allen Lane The Penguin Press (London) and The Library Press (New York).

heart of the matter it might be useful if I were to introduce myself—not from the point of view of my academic appointments, but from that of my political development. Many critics of my book have said that in order to judge a person's views you must know his political allegiance; let me briefly set down my beliefs.

I was born in Berlin, in the middle of the first World War; I grew up in the Weimar Republic and became a member of what I may perhaps call the "Old Left", in order to contrast it with the "New Left", now so popular. Like many others I made the journey from Marxism to Socialism, and finally to liberalism; always opposed root-and-branch to the growing fascist threat of Hitler and his thugs. Like most of my young friends I tended to despise the Social Democrats for their pusillanimity, and the Communists for their stupidity—did they not side with the Nazis over the tram-drivers' strike to bring down the Weimar Republic, a move which would leave them helpless in the face of a raging tiger? The fatal weaknesses of the democratic forces finally led to the downfall of the German Republic, and after an uneasy year of opposition I left Germany and became an exile. Many of my friends paid for their refusal to join the conqueror by suffering death or incarceration in Hitler's concentration camps.

The "Old Left" had certain characteristics which may be worth recounting. There was a belief in rational argument, in the power of reason, of persuasion; this was directly opposed to the belief of the Right in power, in emotion, and in an irrational group-mind. We had our differences, but we tried to argue them out in cafés, in beer cellars, or on the streets; one could never argue with Hitler's storm-troops, or his S.S. In addition, we were all agreed in a dislike of racialism, in a belief in equality of opportunity, and a hatred of exploitation. When I came to England I was classified as what became known as a "premature anti-Nazi"; England was not ready then to recognise the threat to all civilised values which Hitler represented. I have not substantially changed my views over the years; and when, as an academic, I had to teach university courses on intelligence I had no difficulty in telling my students that there was no evidence for genetic differences in intelligence between racial groups, and that the differences that existed were due entirely to environmental pressures and disadvantages imposed on coloured and other groups. This was then the orthodox position, and in all truth there was little evidence to contradict it. However, gradually I came across more and more material that seemed difficult to reconcile with these confident pronouncements. If you matched black and white

children in America with respect to schooling, housing, and parental status and income, this hardly reduced the 15-point difference in IQ between the races; worse, if you took the children of black middle-class parents, coming from good schools and living in good surroundings, and compared them with the children of white working-class children, coming from poor slum schools and living in poor surroundings, still the white children came out better on IQ tests—although now the difference was quite small. I did not find facts of this kind easy to integrate with my belief in the environmental causation of racial differences in intelligence, and I ceased to lecture on this problem—I did not think it was fair for me to give an opinion when I was in doubt myself.

AS THE LITERATURE grew and grew, so my doubts became more and more definite; I could not in all honesty maintain that environmental pressures could account for all the differences found, and yet my hatred of “racialism” made me most reluctant to entertain the belief that Negroes were actually genetically predisposed to lower IQ levels. The publication of Dr Audrey Shuey’s great book, *The Testing of Negro Intelligence* (1958), brought my doubts to a focus. She reviewed the whole evidence in the most impartial manner possible, and left the reader with little doubt that genetic factors were indeed implicated in the observed differences between blacks and whites. I re-read the whole set of articles and books relating to this problem, and emerged with the firm impression that Dr Shuey was right. I also decided that having set my mind at rest, I would not myself publish anything on this problem—the Negroes, or so it seemed to me, were having enough problems without my adding another one! But this decision was short-lived. The publication of Professor Arthur Jensen’s monograph in the *Harvard Educational Review* brought the discussion to the boil, and clearly nothing could put the genie back into the bottle. Jensen is a good friend of mine; he had spent a year in my Department some time prior to writing his monograph, and I knew him to be an exceptionally careful and gifted worker. I was pleased to find that his conclusion was very similar to mine; he too could not see any way in which the evidence could be made to say that *environmental factors alone* were responsible for the poor scores of Negroes on IQ tests.

Jensen’s paper was very long, and very technical; very few people have in fact read it. Most people know nothing about it except what they may have read in their newspapers, and those reports were, alas, exceptionally misleading and often downright false. Jensen has now told the

story of his own clobbering by the ideologues of the New Left in the preface of a new book of his entitled *Genetics and Education*; anyone interested in the way that leaders of progressive academic thought uphold the principles of freedom of speech should regard this preface as required reading. As just one example, consider the editors of the *Harvard Educational Review*, who had originally asked Jensen to contribute an article on the topic of IQ and Scholastic Achievement, and who had specified that he should deal with the colour problem. When the sparks began to fly, they publicly announced that they had *not* asked him to deal with the colour problem; they refused to sell copies of the journal to many people who wanted to buy it in order to read the article for themselves; and they refused to let Jensen have reprints of his own article. The list of misleading statements, of downright lies, and of cowardly subterfuges indulged in by certain eminent upholders of academic rights must be seen to be believed. Jensen’s account gains by his dry and factual tone.

The storm that burst over him was characterised by certain interesting features. In the first place, practically none of the critics had read his paper, or could have understood it had they read it. This made it all the easier for them to criticise what they thought he might have written. You cannot easily reply to this kind of criticism; as Dr Johnson said of Shakespeare’s *Cymbeline*, you cannot criticise unresisting imbecility. I do not here want to argue whether Jensen was right or wrong; truly competent judges have not found any serious error in his statements. But this is not the point. The matters on which he was publicly criticised—perhaps pilloried is a better word—were usually quite unrelated to anything he had in fact said. That much is easy to verify, and it is sufficient to make one wonder about the motivation of his critics, and about their aims. It seems that they set out to discredit him by any and all means in their power, regardless of the truth or falsity of his statements; this is precisely the kind of thing we had come to expect from the exponents of the Right when I was a youngster in Germany. To see it now making its appearance among those who claimed to be on the Left—the “new” Left, admittedly—was a great shock to me. It also came as a surprise to Jensen, who found himself pilloried (in some literature distributed by the British Society for Social Responsibility in Science, in preparation for a meeting at which Jensen was debating his case against some British workers) as a *segregationist*—doubly surprising because he had just come from Washington where he had been testifying before a Senate Committee in favour of desegregation!

So much for the social responsibility of this particular group of scientists.

IT NOW SEEMED TO ME that in view of this continuing controversy it might be useful to publish a brief, factual account of the position, intelligible to the non-expert, and explaining in some detail the scientific meaning of such terms as "race", "intelligence", and "heredity"—terms which are used with rare abandon, and little accuracy, by many writers in the press and speakers on television. Again, I will not argue about the success or otherwise of this venture. There can never be a guarantee that one's conclusions are right in science, but the favourable comment of such experts as Sir Cyril Burt and Professor C. D. Darlington about the book may reassure readers that at least there are no obvious errors in it. But my main reasons for putting in my oar were as follows.

In the first place, Jensen had written a scientific monograph. His account of racial differences had been confined to just a few pages; and while he had given a simple factual statement of the position, he had (quite appropriately under the circumstances) not dealt with the wider implications and ramifications of the facts as stated. It was assumed by the newspapers and journals which publicised the story so widely that a statement that there was a genetic component to the inferiority of Negroes on IQ tests implied many things—from segregation to genocide—which in truth it did not imply at all. Most of the protests in fact were against these hypothetical implications, rather than against the original statement. It seemed desirable to set the record straight, and to state unequivocally that there are two entirely separate problems here.

The first problem is the factual one: what does the evidence say about the causes of the undisputed Negro inferiority on IQ tests? The second problem is the ethical one: assuming that genetics play an important part, what shall we do about it? There is no implication of any particular answer to the second problem in the answer to the first. I stated categorically that even if it were true that Negroes are innately predisposed to do badly on IQ tests, this does *not in any way* justify us in treating them on a racial basis, in regarding them as generally inferior, or in discriminating against them in any way, shape or form. It seems to me axiomatic that any person must be judged on what he is, rather than on the basis of his race, sex, or religion; the existence of differences between the average scores of groups on IQ or any other quality is scientifically interesting and important, and may suggest better methods of overcoming the difficulties experienced by members of such groups.

But it does not abrogate the right of any person to be treated as a person, rather than as a representative of a racial or other kind of group. With all of this Arthur Jensen of course agrees. It seemed to me important that it should be said, explicitly and clearly.

In the second place, it seemed important to me that another point should be brought out clearly and explicitly, namely the true nature and extent of the problem in question. Negroes on the whole have low IQs; this is a serious bar to their progress. But many whites have low IQs also; in fact, as there are almost 10 whites for every Negro in the U.S.A., the total number of low IQ whites is in fact larger than the total number of low IQ blacks! As I put it rather colourfully in my book, to concentrate on "black dullness" is in reality a red herring—the real social problem is dullness as such, regardless of colour. We have built up a civilisation in the West which stresses intelligence, knowledge, literacy, and in which there is less and less room or need for those unable to learn. This produces a gigantic problem which society has done nothing to solve, and which it resolutely refuses to face. What is to be done with all those whose innate limitations condemn them to live through life with an IQ of 85 or below? Colour of the skin may be an additional handicap to some, but the problem is as real for those whose skin is pure white or grey-pink—it is dullness as such that causes the difficulty.

Given these two points, my third reason for writing the book was to suggest that, having recognised the problem, we should proceed to *try* and solve it. Assumptions that it could be solved along traditional lines approved by Left-wing advocates of Better Schools, Smaller Classes, and More Teachers are clearly disproved by the facts, and do not accord with the well-known importance of genetic factors in determining intellectual competence. I do not want here to go into the suggestions Jensen and I have made in this respect; that would take me much too far afield. I merely want to mention this because critics have sometimes suggested that the publication of the book was "irresponsible", and served no purpose but the exacerbation of racial conflict. Whether it had this alleged effect is very doubtful; but certainly the purpose for which it was written was quite different.

WHEN MY BOOK WAS PUBLISHED, comments and reviews began to pour in, and it is these which furnish so intriguing an insight into the process of attitude formation and the moulding of opinion. Roughly speaking, reactions can be classified into four main groups. The first (and,

unfortunately, the smallest) consists of accurate, factual reports of the contents, with suitable selection of the most important statements and facts in the book. In fact, of the hundreds of articles I saw, only one falls into this category; not surprisingly, this appeared in *The Times* of London. The author came to see me, asked a number of very pertinent questions in order to make quite sure that he was not misrepresenting my meaning, and then went away and prepared an excellent, truthful, and brief presentation of the main contents of the book. If only all journalism could be carried out at this level! The second category (and perhaps the largest) consists of treatments which trivialise the contents; inevitably this group contains most of the tabloid papers. Typical perhaps is the treatment given the book by the *Daily Mirror*; of all the issues raised, they chose to highlight the fact, mentioned just in passing, and quite irrelevant to the main argument, that the Irish score rather poorly on IQ tests! This caused a number of Irish navvies to ring up and threaten to punch me on the nose, no doubt under the illusion that this was a rational argument which would disprove my factual statement. Several Irish papers took up the point, as did a number of letter-writers; their argument seemed to be that there were a large number of famous Irishmen, from G. B. Shaw to President Kennedy—and didn't that show how clever the Irish were? Unfortunately those who argued in this vein had forgotten to read what I actually said—which was that the emigration of many of Ireland's brightest sons left those remaining with a depleted gene pool. The fact that many émigré Irishmen are very bright merely supports my hypothesis. Trivialisation is annoying, but not perhaps terribly important; intelligent readers do not take such newspapers seriously, and do not accept the alleged factual statements and value judgments there given without a little careful checking.

MUCH MORE SERIOUS is the treatment given the book by the third group of papers—they simply

ignored it, and failed even to mention its existence. The Germans call this treatment "*totgeschwiegen*"—killed by silence—and it is a clever and very efficient method of dealing with an awkward problem. This method was adopted almost universally by the American papers. It was clearly impossible in England once *The Times* and one or two other papers had given the book a good deal of space and discussion. It might be said that the book was not worthy of space in American papers, but this seems unlikely. The problem under discussion is, after all, American rather than English, and in fact there is direct evidence that several book editors of leading papers did not have it reviewed in order to save themselves endless trouble from irate readers. This is an interesting—but also a dangerous—way of dealing with a problem that is not likely to go away simply because we deliberately ignore it. If what Jensen and I say is true, or even half-way true, then ignoring the problem is only likely to make it that much worse. If what we are saying were demonstratively untrue, then it should be exposed as nonsense. No doubt one can kill a book by keeping the buying public in ignorance of its existence. One wonders if that is the proper function of responsible newspapers, and whether democracy can survive this sort of attitude. This particular act of suppression is, to be sure, unimportant; it is the principle on which book editors seem to have acted which is so frightening. One swallow does not make a summer, but do we really wish to live in a society where illiterate trouble-makers decide which books are or are not to be reviewed in the *New York Times*?¹

I have left the fourth category to the last; purposely so, because I shall deal with it in some detail. Into this category I put the honest-to-goodness hatchetmen: reporters who go about their job of discrediting both book and author for Sunday paper purposes. There is a difference between such men, journalists without any scientific background to a man, and critics who might disagree with the writer but do so on rational, scientific grounds; it is not the fact that criticism is offered which is relevant, but the manner and the substance of the criticism. I had not realised that such hatchetmen would exist even in such "quality" papers as the *Sunday Times*; my journalistic education had clearly been very deficient. Let me document my statement with some examples from the lengthy treatment my book received in this the largest of the so-called "quality" Sunday papers in Britain.

THE BEST WAY OF PROCEEDING is perhaps by listing a number of "ploys" which the three writers of the *Sunday Times* article used;

¹ I do not follow the *Times Book Review* regularly, but I note the following by Chandler Brossard in the June 1972 *Harper's Magazine* (p. 110): "... Its dazzling lack of credibility is by now part of our national heritage. It is joked about in the same spooked way Nixon is joked about. The staff reviewers have a unique group-writing talent: their reviews read like high-school compositions written by little old ladies. A malevolent seediness pervades its pages. Nonetheless, it has enough power in commercial publishing to make or destroy a book, no matter what the real quality of the book may be. Most publishers, consequently, will do any amount of toadying to get *The Times* to be good to their books. They will do nothing, as far as I know, to break *The Times'* clammy hold on their world. ..."

these ploys are of course not peculiar to them, but occur again and again in the writings of many others. The first and most remarkable ploy we could call the "Hamlet without the Prince" syndrome. It consists of criticising the book without ever mentioning the facts and arguments stated by the writer to be the most important and convincing! I have already mentioned one of these, to wit the fact that even when it is *middle-class* blacks who are being compared with *working-class* whites, the white children are still ahead on IQ. Even more decisive is another fact, namely that *all* deprived groups show inferiority, particularly on tests involving language and cultural knowledge. This is true of American-Mexican children, Indian children, Puerto Rican children, Oriental children and working-class children as compared with middle-class children. The only group for which this is not true is that made up of black children in the U.S.A.; they are much farther below white children on "culture fair" tests not involving language or cultural, school knowledge, than they are on verbal tests including such knowledge. This is exactly the opposite of what one would have predicted on the basis of an Environmental Hypothesis, and of what in fact experts had for many years anticipated. Black children are deficient in the abstract ability called for by "culture fair" tests; they do much better on tests involving school learning. This suggests that by giving similar schooling to black and white children, the American system has in some way compensated up to a point for the innate lower ability of the blacks. Whether we accept this argument or not, one would imagine that anyone purporting to write an article evaluating my thesis would at least mention the facts in question; not one word was to be found in the *Sunday Times* regarding all of this. This stratagem, alas, was followed by almost every other critic of my book, even including the authors of a recent paperback entitled *Race, Culture and Intelligence*,² purporting to present the issues in the debate in an impartial fashion. One can but wonder what concept of "impartiality" people may have who refuse even to mention the most important evidence in favour of the views they happen to dislike.

The second ploy is that of quoting authority—or perhaps I should say, misquoting authority. This can be done very cleverly, so that even the authority in question might not at first glance see anything wrong. The authors of the article take

me to task for stating that there is strong evidence for the dependence of intelligence on genetic factors, to the extent of 80% of variation in intelligence being due to genetic, 20% to environmental factors, a statement based on studies of identical twins brought up in separation from each other. They then quote Professor Donald Hebb as stating "that it is meaningless to ask which, [of] heredity or environment, contributes more to intelligence." Now Hebb never denied the great importance of the genetic contribution to individual differences in intelligence; as I point out in my book, this is the crucial point. The precise allocation of contributions is not important for my argument; hence as far as my argument goes, Hebb and I are in perfect agreement. Furthermore, when Hebb made this remark many years ago, available methods of statistical treatment made assessments of respective contributions of heredity and environment very speculative; modern methods have obviated many of the assumptions on which the older methods had to rely. Thus a proper quotation of "expert opinion" would give quite a different picture to that presented by the unholy *Sunday Times* trinity which penned this particular indictment.

The third ploy resembles in its simplicity the first, but gives even more room for inventiveness. It consists of contradicting arguments the original author never made, and disregarding his own assessments of these arguments. Thus, after carefully reviewing the evidence on genetic studies, and their relevance to the debate about black/white differences in IQ, I come to the conclusion that *no direct link* has been established between the two, and that we cannot conclude from the one to the other. This is what the critics also say, of course; but you would in vain look for any acknowledgment of this agreement in their writings. The pretence is made throughout that I maintain exactly the opposite of what I actually said, and that the criticisms made by my opponents are in some way novel and destructive of my point of view. This is of course good, unclean fun; it has little to do with impartial criticism and review.

Ploy number four uses time-distortion to give the impression of inaccuracy in my writing. In pointing out that many people do not want to know the truth, I mentioned in my book the fact that the American Academy of Sciences had steadfastly refused to support enquiry into the field of genetic black/white differences. My three critics manage to turn this into some form of paranoid delusion by saying that the committee which the Academy set up to consider the matter actually reported: "A majority of the committee has come to feel that the support and encourage-

² *Race, Culture and Intelligence*. Ed. by Martin Richards, Ken Richardson and David Spears. (Penguin.) See, especially, the review of this book in *New Society* (24 February 1972) by Professor Arthur Jensen.

ment given to this field may be less than the importance of the field justifies. . . ." True, but as it happens the committee reported *after* my book had been finished; even the most accurate of scientists can hardly be expected to prophesy what a sub-committee of whose existence he had no knowledge would report in the future! As it happens my critics actually fell into their own trap; the Academy accepted that part of the committee's report stating that this field was of genuine scientific concern and interest, but refused to actually put up any money. The decision

of the American Academy that research in this area was "respectable" scientifically should be remembered; as we shall see, other critics decided that they did not consider the problem capable of scientific solution, and hence decided that my book was "political" rather than "scientific".

Ploy number five is perhaps the best of all: it consists of simply attributing to me opinions which are the exact opposite of what I said in my book. The article in the *Sunday Times* stated that I make "an indiscriminate attack on attempts to improve Negro education on the grounds that

Hazards of the Academic Life

Cambridge, Mass.

RICHARD HERRNSTEIN keeps a list in his pocket of all the complaints he has heard about the recent article he wrote for the *Atlantic Monthly*. Since then he has been anathematized by SDS, criticized by Faculty members here and at other universities, and denounced by publications on the Left and on the Right. He has been called a racist, a sexist, a fascist, a publicity seeker, and a shoddy scholar.

Although a little taken aback by the reaction his article has provoked, Herrnstein remains undaunted. "I have a good 50 moments of doubt a day," he said discussing his theories last week. "But if you're asking would I change that article, no, there's nothing substantive I would change."

The article, entitled simply "I.Q.," says that a virtually hereditary meritocracy based on intellectual abilities will arise as contemporary political and social goals are realized. Herrnstein believes that our society is evolving distinct classes based on intelligence, and that the I.Q. gap between the upper and the lower classes is increasing. This belief is based on his conviction that intelligence is 80 per cent inheritable.

In his own words, his theory "points to a future in which social classes not only continue, but become ever more solidly built on inborn differences." He says that as the social barriers of the past, such as race, religion, nationality, title and inherited wealth, are knocked down by liberal reforms, actual social mobility will be blocked by "innate human differences."

HERRNSTEIN HAS SHARPLY differentiated his views from those of Arthur Jensen, the Berkeley psychologist with whom critics often associate him. Jensen, in a 120-page article in the *Harvard Educational Review* in 1969 said that the I.Q. gap between blacks and whites is largely genetically-rooted.

"I think the parts of Jensen's article on racial differences might have been better left out," Herrnstein said. "There's just not sufficient evidence to make the conclusions he did."

"When I sent Jensen a copy of my manuscript before it was published, he wrote me that I hadn't

included enough about racial differences. Then I wrote back to him, 'Ah, but you wrote too much'."

HERRNSTEIN FEELS that the topic of genetics' relationship to intelligence has become academically "verboten" because of political considerations.

On the first day of classes last Fall, SDS began leafletting outside Herrnstein's Burr Lecture Hall classroom. A week later SDS escalated its tactics by taping signs on classroom walls and writing slogans on the blackboard which called Herrnstein a racist. On November 16, 30 students attempted to confront President Bok at his Massachusetts Hall office to demand that the University fire Herrnstein. Later in November, more than 100 Faculty members signed a statement, which appeared as an advertisement in *The Crimson*, supporting Herrnstein's right to teach his theories and denouncing the SDS protests. The statement accused SDS of attacking Herrnstein personally through "false and offensive placards, leaflets, picketing and threats to disrupt his classes."

HERRNSTEIN WAS BORN in New York in 1930, the only child of two Jewish Hungarian immigrants. He was brought up speaking Hungarian and didn't learn English until he went to school. His parents were Bolsheviks, he said, and he has reacted against them.

Politics has never been one of his great interests. "In college, after an abortive little flirtation with the local Marxists—I decided I wasn't very good political material." He did become involved in Henry Wallace's campaign for the presidency in 1948. "I was quite crushed when he didn't win," he recalls.

Another 20 years passed before he became politically concerned again, this time with another unsuccessful presidential candidate, Eugene McCarthy. Herrnstein's fears reached a peak during the SDS National Convention Against Racism held here earlier this year. For the four days of the convention he and his family visited relatives in upstate New York. To safeguard his work, he removed all of his important papers from his office. He also left notes in several places in his office to surprise anyone who broke in. Inside his filing cabinet he left a note

the subjects may be too stupid to benefit from them." *Exactly the opposite is true.* I argue most strongly in favour of discovering better ways of improving Negro education than those which have led to the failure of "Headstart" and other similar programmes, and I quote with approval Heber's work as possibly leading to such improvements. Similarly, I am supposed to believe that "ghetto inhabitants may have 'selected' their own environment as a consequence of genetically determined low intelligence." Of course no quotations are given to demonstrate that I do in fact

hold such absurd views, which go counter to anything I believe. Invention is the mother of distortion.

THESE FIVE PLOYS ensure that the reader will be unable to see what the writer did in fact say, how what he says agrees with expert opinion, or what consequences follow from it; he will instead be told a number of things the writer never said, and would actually oppose most strongly. To have achieved all this in the space of a single newspaper article suggests that the authors might confidently expect to receive a Pulitzer Prize for outstanding service to the cause of imagination—there is here none of that subservience to fact which so many literary figures lament nowadays.

In contrast to these curious outpourings of fancy by three London journalists having no expert knowledge of any of the disciplines involved in the discussion, there is the review of my book, published in the same paper, and written by a very eminent geneticist, Professor C. D. Darlington. Here, one might think, technical criticisms would come thick and fast; no such thing. The expert approved; it was the journalists who did not. Similarly, Sir Cyril Burt, perhaps the leading expert on intelligence-testing in the world, approved the book; it was journalists who dissented. Thus we seem to live in a rather topsy-turvy world, where expositions of scientific facts are criticised by journalists as not being factual, while the experts have no such complaints. Trial by journalism has been added to the usual pitfalls of scientific popularisation; and it is difficult to gainsay one's impression that these journalistic criticisms are provoked more by political than by scientific objections.

WHAT I HAVE DESCRIBED in relation to the *Sunday Times* was recapitulated in so many papers that repetition would become wearying. Let me go on instead to the efforts made by Television to put this debate "in focus".

The B.B.C. was arranging a series of *Controversy* programmes, in which one scientist, proposing some unpopular fact or argument, was opposed by half-a-dozen colleagues who listened to a half-hour presentation of his case, and then argued the matter with him. The whole programme was filmed before an audience of some 300 persons who had volunteered to attend (mostly students). The confrontations took place in the main lecture hall of the Royal Institution, famous as the place where Davy and Faraday held Victorian London spell-bound by their popular lectures on science. The talks were illustrated, diagrams and other visual aids being projected on the wall behind the speaker. Among the talkers were Sir Ernst Chain, Dr Edward

which said, "What are you doing here?" Another note said, "There's a policeman behind you."

The convention itself centered predictably on attacking the intelligence theories of Herrnstein, Berkeley geneticist Arthur Jensen and Stanford engineer and Nobel Prize-winner, William Shockley. It was orderly and caused no damage to the University facilities used. Nonetheless, out of fear that the group might get out of hand, Harvard spent more than \$5000 in extra security measures.

SDS's strongest protest against Herrnstein occurred shortly before the convention. On March 6, 25 members of SDS noisily pursued Herrnstein for 20 minutes after he left his lecture in Soc Sci 15. Two weeks later Herrnstein and Dean Whitlock filed charges with the Committee on Rights and Responsibilities (CRR) against two of the demonstration's participants.

THE COMPLAINT AGAINST the two students alleged that they shouted and jeered at Herrnstein "in a loud, persistent, and sustained fashion, using epithets such as 'racist' and 'fascist' and accusing him of various atrocities." After three weeks of deadlocked discussion, the CRR was unable to reach a verdict and acquitted both students.

Although Herrnstein maintained he was not disheartened by the CRR's verdict, he said that he found some news of the week before much more gratifying. On April 12, Bok publicly warned that the anti-Herrnstein protests had serious effects beyond the well-being of one professor. SDS's protests are threatening to make scholars "turn to more placid subjects where risks are not involved."

Herrnstein's primary fear is not that SDS will harm him personally or give him a bad reputation professionally. He is more afraid of the effect the protests will have on his colleagues in the Faculty here and in other universities. He appears to see himself as somewhat of a hero for academic freedom. "The attacks on me have not bothered me personally. What bothers me is this: something has happened at Harvard this year that makes it hazardous for a professor to teach certain kinds of views."

The Harvard Crimson
(1972 Commencement Issue)

Teller, and Professor B. F. Skinner; my own *IQ Argument* was one of this series. On the seats reserved for the "opposition" (whose duty presumably it was to oppose) were three well-known geneticists, one psychologist, one sociologist, and one economist who had written on education. The sociologist was as well known for his Left wing political opinions as for his sociology; the psychologist was quite unknown to me, and as his only comment seemed to be that he was more interested in things other than the issue in question his presence remained something of a mystery to me. The economist-educationalist again was a Left pundit, with no background knowledge of either genetics or psychology. The audience, when I came out to begin my talk, was mostly young, with only a sprinkling of middle-aged or older faces; there was also an unmistakable group of some 30 or so coloured students, sitting together and not looking too pleased with the whole affair.

Actually these recordings are quite complex affairs. In order to show the glorified slides on the screen you have to move to predetermined places, and "cue in" the cameraman by saying a pre-arranged sentence; this has to be fitted into your talk pretty accurately; you cannot, of course, read your speech, as this is said to go down very badly on television. Furthermore, the B.B.C. were trying out a new method of slide presentation, in which the screen behind the lecturer remained vacant and slightly blue in tint. The diagram or picture was superimposed electronically and appeared as if it were on the screen when you saw the whole thing on the television, but not when you were in the actual lecture theatre; this means you had to point to details on the screen behind you which were not actually there. (The reason for all this was at the time explained to me, but escapes me now.) Anyway, I was pretty busy concentrating on my performance, and had little time to give to the audience. I was allowed to go on for about eight minutes; then the coloured group of students began to interrupt, chant slogans, and shout insults. This brought proceedings to a halt, and I sat down in my chair, curious to see how the chairman would deal with the situation. (The discussion was not transmitted live, so most of the interruption could be—and was—edited out later.) The chairman, a very famous scientist, asked for silence, and tried to reason with the dissidents; he did not get very

far. The students complained that intelligence measurement was all nonsense anyway; suggested it was all a conspiracy to keep blacks down; argued that it was wrong that I, and not they, was afforded the privilege of addressing the audience—in fact, apart from choruses of chants and shouts, they kept at it in this way for about a quarter-of-an-hour. Finally the B.B.C. producer came to the rescue. He told them that there were six critics who would argue against me anyway; and he finally agreed that two of their number would be allowed to join the "official" critics and give their opinions later on. He asked for students of social science to come forward, but apparently there were none. He finally had to make do with one who claimed to be a student of mathematics, and another one whose provenance remained obscure. I was then allowed to continue, and managed to finish with only a few further interruptions. The rest of the audience seemed to get rather impatient with the protesters, but their attempts to get the talk moving again could not succeed, of course; one person shouting can keep 300 others from hearing the lecture.

Then it was the turn of the critics. The three geneticists had their say, and on the whole behaved in a rather academic fashion, making comments which in form and substance could be regarded as reasonable statements. Even they, though, fell into the trap which had been set by the very form of the programme. A programme which is entitled *Controversy* suggests that you should controvert, and when you agree with the speaker on 99% of what he has said, then you must make the most you can of the remaining 1%—preferably without mentioning the 99% agreement. This of course gives entirely the wrong impression—look how these "experts" disagree! Strictly speaking what the geneticists said was irrelevant to my talk, in so far as their comments were factually correct; they took up esoteric points from my book, which I had not mentioned in the talk, and made criticisms with which I would often have tended to agree myself. Only one made a really critical comment that was relevant; unfortunately he was wrong on a matter of fact.³ To their honour let me say that all three seemed somewhat unhappy with the whole set-up, and seemed to realise that it put them in a somewhat false position.

THE OTHER THREE behaved in a different manner, leaving academic argument and reason behind, and adopting rather the methods of the hustings. Not for them quiet, peaceful discussion, aimed at understanding and rectification of error, if any—they preferred inflammatory political speeches, to the huge delight of the audience (or at least one

³ He suggested that in calculating our 80%/20% ratio of Heredity vs. Environment, Jensen and I had omitted to take into account homogamy, i.e. the tendency of intelligent men to marry intelligent women. Of course we had not made such an elementary mistake, and if he had looked carefully at Jensen's book or mine, he would have seen that this was not so.

part of it). These speeches proved, if such proof were needed, that none of them understood the genetic arguments involved; this did not prevent them from accusing me of presenting "shoddy" experiments, or from stating that the whole problem was "pseudo-scientific"—presumably they had not yet heard of the Academy of Sciences sub-committee, made up of the world's foremost experts, which has come to the conclusion that it was certainly worthy of scientific investigation. The reader will not be surprised that not one of the participants dealt with my main arguments in favour of the genetic hypothesis; in this they followed the lead of the *Sunday Times* to a man.

What was intriguing for me, as a psychologist, was the emotional force behind the speeches. These people were clearly consumed with anger, giving vent to a passion which seemed quite inappropriate to the occasion. Occasionally, this passion made them quite incoherent. I could only sit and wonder.

Then it was the turn of the two coloured students who had been elected to represent the interrupters. What they said was, unfortunately, almost pure nonsense; one argument, however, should be preserved in order to give an idea of the Alice-in-Wonderland atmosphere they created. The "mathematician" stated that he had a perfectly logical argument to show that the notion of the IQ was absurd. Take God, he said. God has always existed; therefore his *chronological age* is infinity. But God is also all-wise; consequently his *mental age* is infinity. Now the IQ is the ratio of mental age over chronological age; infinity over infinity is zero, therefore God's IQ is zero, which is nonsense. *Ergo*, the notion of the IQ is nonsense. (The notion that infinity divided by infinity is zero is new to me; perhaps this is part of the "new mathematics" our children are being taught at school.)

Finally, the programme came to a merciful close, after I had had a chance to have a last say—in which I pointed out that no one had really contradicted the evidence on which I had based my argument; all that the critics had done was to argue about side-issues which were largely irrelevant. I retired to the "thinking and preparation room" which is set aside for lecturers to gather their thoughts, and there I found a very massive, calm and quiet policeman who had been summoned during the interruption, just in case things got out of hand. "One policeman against 300 students" I thought vaguely, but he obviously did not seem worried by the odds. Anyway, the whole thing passed off fairly peacefully, which is more than one can say would have happened in America, judging by Professor Jensen's experiences.

I HAVE NOW DEALT WITH the reactions of the newspapers, and with a television debate; let me conclude with an account of the reactions of students to invited lectures I gave at the Universities of Birmingham and Leicester.

The theme of the first was the contribution which psychology could make to our political life. Before it started, a group of students distributed a 4-page, single-spaced duplicated leaflet entitled "SEEK TRUTH TO SERVE PEOPLE". The theme was set in the heading: "DENOUNCE FASCIST EYSENCK, INTELLECTUAL PROSTITUTE PROMOTING UNSCIENTIFIC AND ANTI-PEOPLE IDEAS IN THE SERVICE OF IMPERIALISM!" The first paragraph will give a taste of the sweet reasonableness and the academic flavour of this broadsheet:

In an act of open provocation against the working people and all progressive honest scientists, a fascist and intellectual prostitute, parading as a "professor of psychology", is coming to Birmingham University on 16 November. The progressive Intellectuals' Study Group (Birmingham) condemns the visit of H. J. Eysenck to Birmingham to promote himself and anti-people and unscientific ideas in the service of imperialism.

The broadsheet went on in this style (if that be the right term), issuing in priceless sentences such as:

Wildly dreaming that the bourgeoisie will continue sucking the blood of the people forever, Eysenck does propaganda for the practical measures whereby the bourgeoisie can further manipulate the people.

Having thus introduced me to the audience, the writers continue their characterisation:

Eysenck is one of a band of sold-out careerists who are parading as writers, scientists, scholars, *etc.* They have come forward to prostitute themselves in the service of imperialism. Through the promotion of unscientific and anti-people ideas they are creating the ideological basis for the development of fascism.

Fortunately, help is at hand. Admittedly, "the fascist ideas will not collapse of themselves." But never fear; "they will be smashed if we (1) put Mao Tse-tung thought in command of everything, (2) rely on the people and release their revolutionary initiative." So now we know.

At Leicester I was speaking about "The Inequality of Man." Even though I had to compete with no less a group than *Led Zeppelin*, the hall was crowded. I was told that the "New Left" groups in Leicester had protested wildly against my being allowed to come and "make propaganda for my racist ideas"; as it happened I did not deal with race at all in my talk. This rather discomfited the large Communist contingent, but at the end their spokesman (or rather

woman) managed to get out of this impasse in a truly inimitable fashion.

"I protest," she cried, "against this fascist imperialist Eysenck coming here, and not even having the courage to put before us his racist ideas about the inferiority of coloured people!" To do them justice, even the more Left-wing students laughed at this turn-about, and the evening proceeded to its normal conclusion.

HOWEVER RIDICULOUS some of these "militant" English students may have appeared, they never for one moment indulged in, or even threatened, violence. In this they were very different from the American students Arthur Jensen had to contend with. Nor did they camp outside my door, as they did in his case, with a placard saying "*Racist*." And never were my classes broken up, as has happened regularly to his. There is obviously a rather more healthy liberal-democratic climate in England at the moment than in the U.S.A. This is very apparent when we consider the action of *SDS* in trying to prevent U.S. booksellers from stocking the book, and the American distributors from distributing it. They published a news-sheet under the title: *WORLD*

PUBLISHERS SPREAD EYSENCK'S "NEW" RACIAL THEORIES. In this they argued that Jensen, Eysenck, Herrnstein, and Shockley "are attempting to pose pure and simple racism as 'respectable' intellectual viewpoint, just as was popular 100 years ago." Apparently "the ruling class loves to have these ideas spread: Nixon has made Jensen's paper required reading for all top gov't officials and cabinet members!" (If they believe that, they'll believe anything.) The pamphlet ends with the exhortation: "Join with us to picket, petition and pressure World Publishers to drop distribution of this book!" And indeed, many students did just that, going into bookstores and threatening the booksellers with violence if they dared to stock or exhibit the book. They also broke up the classes of academics who dared to review the book—which is really going at least one step beyond anything that had happened to Professor Jensen. Here, more than in England, you get the real whiff of what Professor Jürgen Habermas has called "Left-Fascism." This is the hard and true style I recognise so well from the days when I was arguing with, and being shouted down by, brown- and black-shirted Nazi supporters in pre- and post-Hitler Berlin. In my book on *The Psychology of Politics* (1945) I argued that

Resolution on Scientific Freedom

THE HISTORY OF CIVILIZATION shows many periods when scientific research or teaching was censured, punished, or suppressed for non-scientific reasons, usually for seeming to contradict some religious or political belief. Well-known scientist victims include: Galileo in orthodox Italy; Darwin, in Victorian England; Einstein, in Hitler's Germany; and Mendelian biologists, in Stalin's Russia.

Today, a similar suppression, censure, punishment, and defamation are being applied against scientists who emphasize the role of heredity in human behavior. Published positions are often misquoted and misrepresented; emotional appeals replace scientific reasoning; arguments are directed against the man rather than against the evidence (e.g., a scientist is called "fascist", and his arguments are ignored).

A large number of attacks come from non-scientists, or even anti-scientists, among the political militants on campus. Other attackers include academics committed to environmentalism in their explanation of almost all human differences. And a large number of scientists, who have studied the evidence and are persuaded of the great role played by heredity in human behavior, are silent, neither expressing their beliefs clearly in public, nor rallying strongly to the defense of their more outspoken colleagues.

The results are seen in the present academy: it is virtually heresy to express a hereditarian view, or

to recommend further study of the biological bases of behavior. A kind of orthodox environmentalism dominates the liberal academy, and strongly inhibits teachers, researchers, and scholars from turning to biological explanations or efforts.

NOW, THEREFORE, WE THE UNDERSIGNED SCIENTISTS from a variety of fields, declare the following beliefs and principles:

(1) We have investigated much evidence concerning the possible role of inheritance in human abilities and behaviors, and we believe such hereditary influences are very strong.

(2) We wish strongly to encourage research into the biological and hereditary bases of behavior, as a major complement to the environmental efforts at explanation.

(3) We strongly defend the right, and emphasize the scholarly duty, of the teacher to discuss hereditary influences on behavior, in appropriate settings and with responsible scholarship.

(4) We deplore the evasion of hereditary reasoning in current textbooks, and the failure to give responsible weight to heredity in disciplines such as sociology, social psychology, social anthropology, educational psychology, psychological measurement, and many others.

(5) We call upon liberal academics—upon faculty senates, upon professional and learned societies, upon the American Association of University

political attitudes were not organised around a single Left-Right continuum, but existed in a two-dimensional framework; in addition to the Radical-Conservative axis there was also a Tough-minded vs. Tender-minded axis. In this framework, fascists were Right-wing Tough-minded, and communists Left-wing Tough-minded. I also found that Tough-minded people from Right and Left shared certain personality traits, such as aggressiveness, violence, and mental rigidity. I had not quite expected to be exposed to the proof of the correctness of my diagnosis by the reactions to my own words.

ENOUGH OF THESE personal reminiscences. What sort of a general conclusion can one draw from these odd and variegated facts, and why do I feel that their impact is tragic? Perhaps I may put my standpoint in this way.

We are faced with an unprecedented series of problems, each of gigantic and potentially disastrous proportions. Pollution is one; overpopulation is another; racial strife is a third. We clearly do not know how to deal with these problems; not only do we not know the right answers, we hardly know what proper questions

to ask. In such a perilous situation, it behoves us to heed Sir Francis Bacon's wise words: "If a man will begin with certainties, he shall end in doubt; but if he will be content to begin with doubts, he shall end in certainties. . . ." Looking at the racial problem, we should begin with self-questioning doubt—can we observe any important and relevant differences between races? Can we attribute these to genetic or environmental causes? Can we do anything about reducing or abolishing them? No one knows for sure, and our best way is obviously that of critical and cautious experimentation. My book constituted an attempt to survey what was factually known about such problems, and to suggest what conclusions, if any, could be drawn from the facts. I also attempted to suggest further experiments which might throw light on these intricate and difficult problems. My feeble efforts were greeted with scorn by those who already knew the answers—of course there are no races, of course blacks are as bright as whites, of course any putative differences are due to environmental factors. And, of course, anyone who dares to doubt these truths must be a fascist, seduced by the establishment into utter intellectual prostitution. No attempt here to argue the case, or to deal with the facts—this would be "bourgeois objectivity" which Stalin already condemned as counter-revolutionary (and which Hitler condemned as "semitic"—he preferred to think with "blood and iron"). And, to be sure, if we *know* the truth—presumably through Marxological revelation—then the end justifies the means: burn books, boycott publishers and book-sellers, break up meetings, threaten and persecute those who dare disagree with you. Force, not reason, becomes the measuring-rod of truth. This was the psychology of the fascists under whose rule I grew up in Germany; it has been taken over *holus-bolus* by the scattered troops of the "New Left." Is it any wonder that, to me at least (but I am not alone here) they appear nothing but left-wing fascists, sharing with Hitler their creed of unreason, intolerance, and veneration of force?

In my view, it bodes evil for our society that these attitudes should be found among students, *i.e.* among those who have been selected specially for their intellectual ability, and who have been trained (or should have been trained) in the use of reason. If the best that such people can do, in reply to the facts I had gathered and the arguments I had put forward, is to call the book "racist" and to advocate that all would be well if only we "put Mao Tse-tung thought in command of everything", then God help the next generation! One does not expect everyone to agree with one, but one does expect from University students that they should read a book

Professors, upon the American Civil Liberties Union, upon the University Centres for Rational Alternatives, upon presidents and boards of trustees, upon departments of science, and upon the editors of scholarly journals—to insist upon the openness of social science to the well-grounded claims of bio-behavioral reasoning, and to protect vigilantly any qualified faculty members who responsibly teach, research, or publish concerning such reasoning.

We so urge because as scientists we believe that human problems may best be remedied by increased human knowledge, and that such increases in knowledge lead much more probably to the enhancement of human happiness, than to the opposite.

SIGNED BY 50 EMINENT SCIENTISTS, AMONG THEM: Francis H. C. Crick, Nobel Prize-winner, Laboratory of Molecular Biology, Cambridge University; Jacques Monod, Nobel Prize-winner, Institut Pasteur, College de France; H. J. Eysenck, Professor of Psychology, Institute of Psychiatry, University of London; Arthur R. Jensen, Professor of Educational Psychology, University of California; Richard Herrnstein, Professor of Psychology, Harvard University; C. D. Darlington, Professor of Botany, Oxford University; John C. Kendrew, Nobel Prize-winner, Laboratory of Molecular Biology, Cambridge University.

carefully before condemning it, that they should formulate some sort of a thoughtful answer to the facts and arguments contained therein, and that they should with some personal pride desist from the most vulgar sort of *argumentum ad hominem*. Equally the task of newspapers, particularly so-called "quality newspapers", is surely to put before their readers reliable information concerning recent developments in research. What is it but an abdication of responsibility to retire into silence, for fear of trouble (like the *New York Times*) or to misrepresent completely the arguments actually advanced (like the *Sunday Times*)?

THE ROT HAS SET IN, and it has done so more insidiously than is generally realised. In the face of campaigns of violence, hatred and persecution many scholars have begun to mind their *p*'s and *q*'s, and dot their *i*'s and cross their *t*'s; that is to say, withdraw from acknowledging their real views and opinions publicly. Both Professor Arthur Jensen and I have talked to eminent geneticists and psychologists who—in private—agreed with our views, but refused to be quoted publicly, for fear of repercussions. Worse than that. Some have in public said things which in private they would repudiate, and did in fact repudiate. This can easily be done, even without stating an obvious falsehood; you need perhaps to be a professor to see through the academic trick. Thus Jensen and I have stated that the contribution of heredity to IQ differences is about 80%; a geneticist could easily stand up in public, to general applause, and say that he did not agree with that figure, and doubted that it was meaningful. When you talk with him in private, you discover that all he means is that no such precise figure as "80%" can be given, and that any figure is meaningful only when a population is specified—both points which Jensen and I stressed particularly, and which are indeed obvious to any scientist. Thus complete agreement is apparently turned into violent disagreement, which is then widely publicised by those who oppose all scientific investigation of these problems. In science it is always possible to argue that "Not enough is known to come to any definite conclusion", and that "More data are required before one can commit oneself." This is always safe; and when you don't like someone's conclusions, these phrases, rolling trippingly off the tongue, will not only get you off the hook, but will also mark you as a careful, conscientious scholar. On these grounds you might just as well say that the evidence is not yet completely conclusive about the heliocentric theory of Copernicus, and that you are prudently reserving judgment. To be sure, one should not be too

hasty to proclaim as fact what is still surmise, and neither Jensen nor I has ever said that the considerable evidence that has been gathered was conclusive. Nevertheless, there comes a point where many different types of investigation point to a particular conclusion, and this agreement should be noted and pointed out. Scientific conclusions are never *certain*. To state that our provisional statements about race and intelligence are not known to be certainly true is to say nothing but that they reflect a continuing scientific investigation, rather than some final divine inspiration.

But what good can the publication of such books as *The IQ Argument* do? Many well-meaning people, far removed from the iconoclastic Left, have asked me this question. The answer is very simple. We wish to help the various disadvantaged groups, be they blacks, poor whites, Red Indians, or whomever. The problem is to know just how this can best be done, and the answer to this question is not obvious, but demands knowledge. "Head-Start" and other programmes were put into effect because many sociologists and educationists thought that through these means the scholastic achievement, and even the IQ, of deprived children could be raised. We now know that this hope was doomed to disappointment. Action not based on knowledge is futile, and may well be counter-productive. Take as a simple example the argument, heard so frequently, that school classes are too large, and that we should aim to have smaller numbers of children in each class. This sounds fine, and is accepted by most people as simple common sense; yet the facts do not bear out the underlying assumptions. There are four large-scale studies, comparing the scholastic achievements of children taught in large and in relatively smaller classes. Careful attention was given to equating the background and socio-economic status of the children in these groups. In every case, the children in the larger classes did in fact better than those in the smaller classes; the differences were not very marked, but all were in the same direction. If we therefore spent large amounts of money on reducing the size of our classes, the outcome might be to make things worse, rather than better. This is not to say that we should do *nothing*. It is simply to argue that we must first do our homework before we plunge in and spend untold millions. Research must come before action; common sense, unfortunately, does not have all the solutions. *The IQ Argument* set out some of the facts we know, and suggested further research that ought to be done; it also pointed out some directions in which we ought to look for ways and means of helping the poor and the dull. If this be judged

small beer compared to the heady draughts of Left wine and Maoist spirits, at least it has the advantage of being based on fact and reasoned argument. Perhaps these will indeed be judged as intellectual advantages by those not yet engulfed in the enthusiasms of a rigid pseudo-progressive ideology.

THIS, THEN, is the *trahison des clercs* of which I make complaint: that both students and their elders and betters have begun to play a child's game of goodies and baddies, in which a man's work is judged, not in terms of its scientific content, or on any rational, empirical basis, but in terms of whether it agrees with the critic's pre-conceptions.

And my suggestion for the future is that which Sir Francis Bacon gave centuries ago in *The Advancement of Learning*:

To have the true testimonies of learning to be better heard, without the interruption of tacit objection, I think good to deliver it from the discredits and disgraces it hath received, all from ignorance; but ignorance severally disguised; appearing sometimes in the zeal and jealousy of divines; sometimes in the severity and arrogance of politiques; and sometimes in the errors and imperfections of learned men themselves....

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LETTERS

On Randall Jarrell

I WANT to make a couple of objections to Douglas Dunn's sympathetic piece ["An Affable Misery," ENCOUNTER, October].

James Dickey is not really an "Adversary" of Jarrell's. His article is an advocate for the prosecution, advocate for the defence, debate. Since both sides are argued forcibly, it is difficult to tell what Dickey means. He himself told me that he wished his praise to surmount difficulties. He was a poet particularly admired by Jarrell at the end of his life.

"For Lowell, Jarrell was the most heartbreaking poet of his generation. One wonders if Lowell was getting his own back." (This is worse in context; I am classified loosely with Donald Hall and the outright denigrators.)

Douglas Dunn is having his joke and probably meant no injury, but his statement could be taken as suggesting that I was slandering my friend in the guise of a compliment. Long ago, Stephen Spender commented that "heartbreaking" wasn't a particularly good thing for a poet to be; he didn't hint that I was making a secret slur. I feel guilty of confusing. My piece on Jarrell was written a few weeks after his sudden, and to us unimaginable, death. This was heartbreaking, his life stopped at its height. His poems are heartbreaking in a tragic but not pathetic way, are like those of Rilke, Hardy and Montale. I cannot think of a better talent for a poet to have—Randall, however, had a thousand others.

ROBERT LOWELL

Maidstone, Kent

Sufism & Pseudo-Sufism

IN THIS AGE of instant coffee and pre-packed fish-fingers it is perhaps naïve to be exasperated by synthetic philosophy and reconstituted mysticism. Yet Doris Lessing's review of Idries Shah's latest book [ENCOUNTER, August] calls for some kind of deflation. She is indeed a true disciple of her mentor; all the Shah hallmarks are there—half-truth, irrelevancy, double-think, misquotation, and invention. A few examples: on page 61 she offers what purports to be a quotation from E. G. Browne's *Literary History of Persia* on the subject of the 10th-century ascetic and mystic Hallaj. Now of course Browne devoted much space to this important figure, but the passage quoted by Doris Lessing appears nowhere in his book. Still, this kind of thing appears to be characteristic of Idries Shah's followers. Robert Graves, in the introduction to his versification of a selection of Omar Khayyam's quatrains, played an exactly parallel trick on the unfortunate Professor Browne.

Another example is Doris Lessing's reference to "Jan Fishan Khan." Oddly enough, there was a 19th-century figure who bore this title; he was Idries Shah's great-great-grandfather. But, far from being a Sufi

teacher, he was the buccaneering leader of a troop of Afghan horse who fought for the British during the First Afghan War, was expelled with them in 1842, and settled down in India with the British-awarded title of Jan Fishan Khan (the Zealot). In 1857 he assisted the British once again at the siege of Delhi, an action that netted him a handsome estate at Sardhana (which his descendants later dissipated through mismanagement). Sir John Keya tells the following story:

Jan Fishan Khan, with his horsemen, did gallant service. Flushed with the excitement of battle, the Afghan chief is said to have declared that another such day would make him a Christian. (Kaye, *History of the Indian Mutiny*, Vol. II, p. 145n.)

An amiable ruffian, but hardly a Sufi!

It is perhaps no coincidence that his latest descendants, having thus misrepresented their forbear, should have inflated their offence by attaching his title to yet another invention—the “A.D. 1153 manuscript” of Omar Khayyam’s *rubā’iyāt*, many times exposed as imaginary and most recently by J. C. E. Bowen in the *Listener* of 3 August. But no doubt we shall be told that reality and existence, truth and fact, may have

whatever meaning the “true Sufi” chooses to put on them.

DORIS LESSING’S GIFT for “double-think” finds its best expression in her remarks about oriental studies. She begins by alleging that there is “hostility” towards Sufism “from the academics who have made orientalism their property.” She then, by a neat juxtaposition, contrives to imply some connection between this alleged hostility and the persecution as heretics of certain Islamic mystics.

The argument falls down at every stage. It is certainly the case that early heretics in Islam were savagely persecuted, as heretics have been persecuted everywhere; but Sufism in due course became a highly respected part of orthodox Islam, and great Sufis like Sana’i, Rumi, Hafiz and Jami were widely revered in their lifetime. Secondly, Western orientalists, so far from being inimical to Sufism, have provided the main channel through which Sufi learning (in the true sense) has during the past two or three centuries reached the Western world. The influence of Islam on the West, which Doris Lessing apparently thinks is a

“Waiting for our

I HAVE BEEN wondering, in contemplation of the massacre at Munich, how long it will be before someone suggests that it was all arranged by the Israelis in order to gain sympathy for their cause and to cast obloquy on the Arabs, before a like-minded thinker declares that the action, though of course regrettable, was nevertheless very understandable in view of the plight of the Palestinian Arabs, before there are protests against the way in which the newspapers and television have been referring to those responsible for planning and carrying out the raid as “terrorists”, before they begin to be referred to as “freedom fighters”, before voices are heard insisting that the Arabs never meant to harm any of the Israelis, who brought everything on themselves, and before the whole lot get together to point out that the incident shows conclusively that all the Germans—or to be absolutely precise all the West Germans—are irreconcilable Nazis and gross materialists to boot, and that it would never have happened if the Olympiad had been held in East Berlin. My guess in each case is: not long.

THIS MAY SEEM a somewhat parochial view of events so terrible and traumatic. I do not think it is. The alternative before me is to join in the general horror and condemnation of the outrage, but I see no point in doing that, for there is nothing I can add, and no special view I can offer, to support an attitude as natural as the attitude that what the terrorists did in Munich was wrong. The sun is bright, but we do not tell each other that the sun is bright; we take it for granted that the brightness of the sun is part of the received opinion of those among whom we move, and content ourselves, when the sun is discussed, with

pointing out peripherally that we have forgotten our sunglasses or are particularly subject to freckles in the summer.

But what if we met people who denied that the sun was bright, and argued that it was, on the contrary, dark? Or that, although it was bright, the moon was very much brighter? Then, surely, we would realize that what we should concern ourselves with, and that speedily, was not the undoubted brightness of the sun, but the mental processes of those who argued in such a fashion.

SUCH, ROUGHLY, is the situation we find ourselves in today. The situation, of course, has not arisen because of what happened at Munich; it existed before. But the Munich events have thrown a concentrated light upon it. And what is revealed in that light is the perversion of thought and of moral feeling that has gradually brought us—via the kind of things that have been said in similar contexts by the people of the kind I have mentioned—to a point at which condonation in Britain of the Munich killings, once inconceivable, will be not only conceived but actually brought to birth.

Perversion of thought is inseparable from perversion of language; strangely, it is the perversion of language that comes first. George Orwell, and before him Karl Kraus, pointed out this truth, and it is high time that we were reminded of it. When totalitarian dictatorships are called People’s Democracies, not only by those in charge of them but by those who live in freedom, when subjugated nations are said to be liberated, and those striving to subjugate nations still free are called liberators, the process has begun; it is continued when obscenity is

brand-new discovery, has been discussed and expounded for at least as long.

That this knowledge is only just beginning to filter into the more rarified levels of our intellectual establishment is scarcely the fault of the orientalists. Orientalism is not, as Doris Lessing with fine inconsistency would have us believe, the Cinderella of the learned world. The 1967 Directory of British Orientalists contains some five hundred names, and the number is steadily growing. The idea that orientalists deliberately exclude would-be students out of jealousy is comic; departments of Oriental Studies exist in the universities precisely for the purpose of encouraging public interest in the subject.

Naturally there is infighting amongst orientalists as amongst any other academics, and even (dare I say it?) amongst poets and novelists. But I cannot congratulate Doris Lessing on her gall in calling in support of her case a quotation, torn out of context, from the late Professor A. J. Arberry, whose vast knowledge of Sufism did not save him from ignorant and vicious attack by another member of Mrs. Lessing's group, Idries Shah's brother. In any case what Professor Arberry was protesting against was

precisely that blend of ignorance and indifference to sound scholarship that is encouraged by the sloppy and superficial methods of Idries Shah and his followers.

BUT OF COURSE WHAT REALLY riles Doris Lessing about orientalists is their failure to succumb to Idries Shah's charm. Orientalists did not "ignore" Idries Shah's book *The Sufis*. But those who like the present writer read it through to the end, hoping to add to their knowledge of this important subject, found nothing but a sludge of childish platitudes. His later "works" have done nothing to improve the picture. If Idries Shah's adherents were to read even one other book on Sufism—by Henry Corbin, for instance, or R. A. Nicholson, A. J. Arberry, Louis Massignon, Cyprian Rice, Margaret Smith, G. C. Anawati or Alessandro Bausani, to mention only writers in European languages—they might have their eyes opened rather abruptly. Better still, they could refer direct to the original works of the Sufi masters. But that, of course, would involve the study of Persian and Arabic, a chore that is not likely to commend itself to

own Executioner"

justified by saying that homelessness is obscene, and political violence excused by the argument that unemployment is violence.

LET US TAKE a simple test case, that of John Stephenson. Does not the evidence already suggest that Stephenson is a perfectly ordinary psychopath, who calls himself Sean MacStoifian, or some such rubbish, in order the better to pretend to be an Irish patriot instead of, what he is, an English homicidal lunatic? And that, in the grip of his dementia, he has for some time been responsible for a series of murders, mostly of people without the slightest political or sectarian connotation about their lives or activities? His nearest equivalent in this country in recent times is surely Peter Manuel, hanged in 1958 after having committed 12 murders. Stephenson, like Manuel, deserves a footnote in the histories of crime; he also deserves understanding of his condition, if only because the more we learn of the workings of such men, the closer we will be to solving the riddle of how they become what they are, and thus to the ultimate solution of ensuring that they do not.

But now think how much comment in newspaper and magazine articles, television and radio programmes you have encountered in the past year or two, in which the dominant note, referring to Stephenson, has been one of condonation. Condonation sometimes accompanied by condemnation; or qualified by the writer's or speaker's insistence that he or she does not, of course, favour killing for political ends; or (the ultimate moral degradation) tempered with the argument that such killing, whatever the morality of it, is "counter-productive" for the cause in which it is done, and is for that reason to be deplored.

WILL ANY OF US, against the background of that symbol (and there are as many more available as you wish to choose from, such as the sympathy expressed for those found guilty of conspiring to cause the "Angry Brigade" bomb explosions in this country), have the right now to be surprised when the excuses for the Munich killers begin?

Few, no doubt, will be found to express wholehearted admiration for the action. But some will, beyond a doubt, argue that those who did it were motivated by high ideals, however misguided was their expression of those ideals; that during the last war we applauded those brave Czechs who assassinated Heydrich; that the Israelis have only themselves to blame because of their behaviour towards the Arabs in their occupied territories; that people are being killed and maimed every day by bombing in Vietnam; that we live in a violent age; that it is appropriate to speak of the Israeli athletes being "executed"; and a dozen more assorted arguments of a like stripe.

WHAT ARE WE TO DEDUCE from this? That Britain is honeycombed with subversion, that revolutionaries are about to take over here, that democracy is in danger? No, but what we are to deduce is even more strange; it is that, as science denies but as religion proclaims, evil is infectious. Some people in this country have caught it badly; some, indeed, are already almost certainly incurable. So we have now got to think seriously about this disease and about what we must do to arrest its progress. . . .

Bernard Levin

in THE TIMES (London)

Idries Shah and his satellites. How much simpler to set one's self up as the sole fountain of truth—provided naturally that you keep well clear of anyone qualified to judge, and confine your missionary endeavours to simple-minded and bewildered intellectuals.

For the fact of the matter is that to label Idries Shah as "the main current exponent of Sufi literature and teaching" is as absurd as Robert Graves' description of him as "the Grand Sheikh of the fifty-million strong Sufi Tariqa." Certainly Shah has been working very hard to establish this myth, and evidently not without success. But no one can claim such a role, least of all Idries Shah, who is the self-appointed head of a small, well-financed and undistinguished offshoot of a movement started earlier this century by followers of Gurdjieff and Ouspensky. As such, it scarcely deserves the tag "Sufi" at all; but to the extent that it does, it is merely one of hundreds, perhaps thousands, of Sufi orders and groupings, none of which can speak for anyone but themselves. True Sufi teaching must be sought in the writings of the masters, and in the expositions of those in both east and west who have taken the trouble to spend years in reading, study and thought.

There are certainly no such people among the motley band who have joined Idries Shah on the neo-mystic bandwagon. Two years ago Doris Lessing was unable to produce the name of more than one with even the most tenuous connection with Islamic studies. The picture today has not changed. We are warned, as we were more than a year ago, of the imminent appearance of a volume of tributes to the great man; but the authors remain steadfastly anonymous. Until their names are unveiled we shall not know whether this anonymity is due to embarrassment at finding themselves in such strange company, or is rather an attempt to cover up the fact that they are members of the same weird gaggle of broadcasters, reviewers, poets and lady novelists that form the élite of Idries Shah's little group.

LET ME CONCLUDE with two quotations. The first is from the Tehran publication *Iran Tribune*: "Western and oriental scholars are concerned that Idries' movement may cause considerable harm to Sufi doctrine by misguiding true students of this great philosophy towards his shallow '*nouvelle orientalisme*'." And from Professor Sayyed Hosein Nasr, Dean of the Faculty of Letters of Tehran University and one of the greatest living authorities on Islamic religious ideas: "Idries Shah's Sufism is 'pseudo-spiritualism' with which the Western market is over-supplied under the name of universal religions or brotherhoods."

These comments come from people who, unlike Idries Shah, were born and bred in the environment out of which Sufism arose and developed, and for whom it is an essential part of their culture. We may safely leave it to the discerning reader to decide whether theirs or Doris Lessing's is the more valid assessment.

L. P. ELWELL-SUTTON
Reader in Persian

University of Edinburgh

AS I AM SURE it is not Mr Elwell-Sutton's intention to mislead anyone about facts, I fancy he will be gratified to know that Idries Shah's support among world scholars and specialists in Sufism who are Sufis is very great and increasing. Mr Elwell-Sutton is able to name only a few regular critics of Shah; yet it was their own campaign which initially drew forth the indignation which led to the celebratory volume in honour of Shah which is to be published, under the most distinguished auspices, in the Spring.

As for the rest of this outburst, both the Symposium (by learned Persians, Arabs, and others as well as Western scholars) and the letter itself will, I fancy, show the intelligent reader that he is witnessing just those symptoms which are described in my article, and throughout Sufi literature. Mr. Elwell-Sutton need not get so heated—he needs only to update his information. Idries Shah's stature and recognition are quite secure. I apologise for the misplaced asterisk in my *ms*, which I tried to correct at a late stage, as it happens; but it is not quite as sinister in intention as Mr Elwell-Sutton fears.

DORIS LESSING

London

French "Structuralism"

E. B. GREENWOOD'S REVIEW [ENCOUNTER, September] of *Modern French Criticism: From Proust and Valéry to Structuralism* reveals yet again a pervasive and fundamental misunderstanding about the nature and objectives of "structuralist" literary analysis.

In debunking structuralism, he quotes with approval Jean-François Revel's remark, in his book on Proust, "what literary work of lasting interest has ever been the product of exclusively formal preoccupations?" I presume that Mr Greenwood understands by "formal preoccupations" a certain aridity of mind, a sterile and anti-human concern with purely mechanical operations, and, as such, cut off from "what is important" to human beings. But if he read the work of the "structuralists" carefully, he would see that "form" is not used in this sense at all. "Formal preoccupations" are, precisely, preoccupations with the various ways in which an intelligible world is constructed, with the ways in which man gives meaning to his experience ("*le procès proprement humain par lequel les hommes donnent du sens aux choses*", in the words of Barthes). Structuralist writing is therefore intimately and intensely engaged with "what is important", since it is an organised, articulated concern with what is specifically and deeply human. Finally, since Mr Greenwood praises Jean-François Revel for having rescued Proust from the "corruption" of the "structuralist prejudice", is there not an irony here, in that at one level *A la recherche* is, precisely, a sustained reflexion on the forms (certain types of writing *versus* other types) through which the Narrator might constitute the meaning of his experience, through which, that is, he might render intelligible "what is important" to him?

Is there not, moreover, a curious paradox in Mr Greenwood's insistence, on the one hand, that

Proust is an important "philosophical novelist" and, on the other, his contemptuous references to the "diet" of Marx, Freud, Sartre, Saussure, Lévi-Strauss served up by the structuralists? Are we to take it that for Mr Greenwood "philosophical" reflexion is both permissible and welcome in the novel (and in literary criticism), provided that many of the major currents in the modern intellectual mainstream are totally ignored?

CHRISTOPHER PRENDERGAST

King's College,
Cambridge

MR CHRISTOPHER PRENDERGAST's objections to my recent remarks on the *dévôts* of Structuralism leave me at a loss where to begin. He tells me that Structuralist writing is concerned "with what is specifically and deeply human" and how could one be against *that*? I would refer him to Revel's protest (in *La Cabale des Dévôts*) against those who are only concerned with judging everything by its relation to the success of a theory or manner of thinking or feeling to which they are attached. That seems to be the spirit in which Mr Prendergast judged my remarks. Not for nothing has Structuralism recently been called the Stalinism of the intellectuals. Mr Prendergast even seems to want to claim Proust as a Structuralist because Proust thought about the problems of his art. Has Mr Prendergast ever heard a *dévo*t of Structuralism in full flow, infatuated by the thought of what non-Euclidean geometries (which go back almost to the time of Kant and which are purely deductive systems with all that *that* implies) have to offer the "new" novelist and poet? Such reflections (their quality apart) do not parallel those of Proust on Zola, Bourget or Balzac. Mr Prendergast might also consider Stanislaw Andreski's remarks (in his recent book on the social sciences as sorcery) about Lévi-Strauss's mystifications with mathematics.

Why is it paradoxical that I should favour the philosophical and repudiate an eclectic mish-mash of modish names? Mr Prendergast seems far too concerned to ascertain that he is swimming with a "major current" in "the modern intellectual mainstream." I am happy to leave him there. No doubt he would have been a staunch Calvinist in sixteenth-century Geneva and a fervent Hegelian in nineteenth-century Prussia, and whatever else was in the mainstream at a given time. Meanwhile I wait for him to give me a statement clear and precise enough to discuss with profit, in my backwater, along with Tolstoy and Proust.

E. B. GREENWOOD

University of Kent
Canterbury

Etzioni's "Active Society"

THE MARCH 1972 issue of *ENCOUNTER* has just caught up with me. In it I find Donald G. MacRae dealing

sarcastically with a book very close to my heart, my *The Active Society*. Your readers might wish to know how he achieves his effects.

First he points to the Warren Breed text, *The Self-Guiding Society*, based on my volume, and cites Breed as saying that I asked him "to reduce the more than 400,000 words of that volume (*The Active Society*) to some 70,000." Mr MacRae adds: "One wonders why Professor Etzioni didn't use only 70,000 words in the

Prediction (1955)

ONE of the more significant and disturbing events of 1955 was the reappearance of Russia as an active factor in the Middle East. This was not in itself surprising. The rulers of Russia since Peter the Great have been interested in the Middle East, and have step by step pushed their way southwards, first to the Black Sea, which was once a Turkish lake, and then down both shores towards Turkey and Persia. Since the war, the Middle East has been the only area in which the frontier of the Soviet Union is not protected by a cordon of satellite states, but abuts directly on the free world. The Soviets have sought in various ways to remedy this. . . .

The Russians, by joining in the Middle Eastern game, have given up their advantage of non-involvement and remoteness—of having no past record of dealing with the Arab states which could be brought against them as a reproach. The things which they are now doing or promising to do, such as delivering arms and offering loans and technical advice, are, after all, the same things as the Western powers have been doing for some time. By engaging in these activities, the Russians are challenging comparison with the West, and, on the whole, it is a comparison which the West has no reason to fear. As the Russians become more closely involved in dealing with Middle Eastern governments and individuals, they too will encounter all the personal difficulties, the incomprehension, irritation, and exasperation, that are a familiar experience of their Western counterparts. I can almost find it in my heart to be sorry for them—they don't know what they are letting themselves in for.

At the present time many leaders of Middle Eastern and Asian states are still blinded by the new light from Moscow. But we may reasonably hope that in the long run, when they have had the opportunity and leisure to compare Russian and Western treatment—in what is given, how much is given, and what is required in return—the comparison will not be to our disadvantage. The principal task of Western statesmanship at this time is to make sure that there is a long run.

Bernard Lewis

THE MIDDLE EAST JOURNAL (Spring 1956)

first place, but that is perhaps unkind." Spare me MacRae's charity and give me a decent quote. If Breed's sentence had not been left half finished (without indication in the quote), the mystery which occupied MacRae's mind would have vanished, to wit, "... to make it accessible and intelligible to the undergraduate and the interested and still-hopeful layman."

That Breed was not completely successful is obvious; MacRae still does not get the message. In reviewing my discussion of knowledge as a resource (or asset) and as a process, he fears I cannot tell the difference between form and substance, which he helpfully confides in us, "are set apart in Aristotelian metaphysics."

The trouble is that Mr MacRae did not read my book (or Breed's). The issue is discussed at great length both on a general level, on the interaction between symbolic and real elements, in Chapter 2; in the specific context of knowledge, in Chapters 6 through 9; and the relations between communication and power, on pages 333 to 342.

Your readers deserve better.

AMITAI ETZIONI

Director, Center for Policy Research,
Columbia University

PROFESSOR ETZIONI is quite wrong. At least in intention I was not sarcastic but ironic. Some of my irony has clearly escaped him which I suppose proves that in the first place it was not very good, although it may also suggest something about Etzioni's perceptions.

I know no way of proving to Etzioni that I read his book with attention, but I did. In doing so I found myself rather in the situation which Etzioni himself ascribes to the inauthentic, "entangled in a cobweb." But whether I myself am in some kind of inauthenticity or not—and like anyone else I can't know—I am at least fairly committed to my craft and I only review books which I have read. I do not think Etzioni's book a good one. I do think it overlong for its content. I do not think it intellectually useful. I may be wrong on these points and I have certainly been wrong in the past but abuse will not alter my mind. I was also genuinely disappointed: it won't cheer Etzioni up to know that I have learned from him in the past, but part of my chagrin results from disappointed expectations.

DONALD G. MACRAE

London

INDEX TO VOLUME XXXVIII

THE INDEX to Volume XXXVIII (January-June 1972) is now available and will be sent, free of charge, on application to ENCOUNTER, 59 St Martin's Lane, London WC2N 4JS. Standing orders for future indexes can also be accepted.

Readers who have already applied to be put on the standing order list need not apply again, as they will receive the new index automatically.

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Gabriel Fielding's latest collection of stories is *New Queens for Old* (Hutchinson). . . .

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Ferdinand Mount is Chief Leader Writer for the Daily Mail. His latest book, *The Theatre of Politics*, has just been published by Weidenfeld. . . .

Adam Ulam's latest book, *The Fall of the American University* (from which his article is an excerpt) will shortly be published by Library Press (New York) and Alcove Press (London). Professor Ulam, who teaches at Harvard, is the author of a study of the *Philosophical Foundation of English Socialism* (1951) as well as other works in Russian history and international affairs: *Lenin & the Bolsheviks* (1966) and *The Rivals* (1972). . . .

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Anthony Thwaite has been Literary Editor of *The Listener* and of the *New Statesman*. A selection of his poetry appears in the Penguin Modern Poets series. . . .

Volume 9 of **Eugène Ionesco's** Collected Plays will be published next year by Calder & Boyars. Among his previous articles in ENCOUNTER are "The Writer and His Problems" (September 1964), "Journal" (February and May 1966, and September 1968), and "Facing the Inferno" (November 1972). . . .

Henry Popkin was for many years New York theatre critic for the *London Times*. He is the author of *Modern British Drama*, and editor of many books on theatre. . . .

The drawings on pp. 51, 52 and 53 are by Chaval.

ENCOUNTER Magazine is published in London by Encounter Ltd. 59 St Martin's Lane, London WC2N 4JS.

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY WATMOUGHS LIMITED, IDLE, BRADFORD; AND LONDON

Life & Letters Today

London

PURE LOGIC: Who wrote this? "I'm so glad I don't like asparagus," said the Small Girl to a Sympathetic Friend. "Because, if I did, I should have to eat it and I can't bear it." . . ." Lewis Carroll? Well, yes, of course, but where?

In the recently discovered manuscript and galley proofs of Carroll's sequel to "Symbolic Logic: Part I, Elementary" which he published in 1896.

THE OBSERVER

New York City

WATCH YOUR LANGUAGE: Youth—members of the generation that places so much importance on communication—seems to be in danger of abandoning language. Many young people now are writing a kind of code that signals, in an instant, just how high and hip the speaker is or wants to be. This new language, sometimes colourful and expressive, is more often only flat and repetitive, filled with the same toneless superlatives, the same fuzzy adjectives. The words are few, not enough to fill a dictionary page, but enough to build a vocabulary around: "trip . . . hassle . . . far out . . . dig . . . head . . . man . . . together . . . where I'm at . . . chick . . . dude . . . like (half-built bridge to a never-completed simile) and, of course, you know". "You know" speaks most eloquently for the growing non-verbal ineloquence. What it really means is "you know what I mean, so why should I bother to say it?"

Individual voices have become less and less identifiable in the great levelling-off process that attaches "wise" to the ends of nouns ("moneywise, happinesswise . . ."), "hopefully" to the beginnings of sentences and clichés like "generation gap" or "peer group."

"Communication," too, has become a cliché, but the problem of communicating is now a very real one. As the quality of language degenerates, so does the quality of communication—and the quality of thought.

NEW YORK TIMES

Johannesburg

WHAT'S IN A WORD: The word "nationality" is to be substituted for "race" on application forms for Barclay cards in South Africa after complaints of discrimination by non-white businessmen.

Mr Esmay Potgieter, National Manager for Barclaycard in South Africa, said "It is good common sense for an organisation such as ours to know the race of a person", adding "that there was no good reason why the word race should not be changed to nationality which is perhaps a far better word."

DAILY TELEGRAPH

Hamburg

CLASSICAL YOUTH: A 16-year-old German student has written the following academic complaint.

"I recently asked our professor of literature which novels and plays we would have to read and study. On my own personal list, next to Gerhart Hauptmann, Rolf Hochhuth, Graham Greene and George Bernard Shaw, there were also the names of Shakespeare, Schiller, Molière and Lessing. My teacher was quite astonished, and asked me in turn what in the world I wanted with that kind of stuff.

"I am afraid that I myself wasn't astonished. Every previous time when I happened to suggest a 'classic' it was always promptly turned down by both the teachers and the students. The attitude of my own contemporaries, who reject the literary works of any previous century as 'Alte Schinken' (old crap), may be understandable; after all, they don't know the books in question. But surely the attitude of our German teachers and scholars is incomprehensible. Do they want to be so 'modern' as to fit in completely with the tastes and standards of their young pupils? It would appear to be so. Both the teachers and the students seem to love Bert Brecht, or Karl Marx, or Asterix; but the so-called 'Klassiker' always seem to be left lying on the left side of the road. I refer to 'Maria Stuart', 'Egmont', 'Romeo and Juliet', 'Nathan der Weise', all of which have become the wall-flowers in our German class-rooms.

"When once in a long while some 'classical' work is touched upon during a semester, it is done only as a burdensome traditional duty, speedily and lovelessly dispatched. But this attitude can only reinforce the longing of young students. This must be changed! Our teachers must learn to recognise that for us the classics are still very relevant today, and they must not be neglected. Otherwise whole ages of great literature will simply pass into oblivion for whole new generations. . . ."

DIE ZEIT

Haverfordwest

SHOW-STOPPER: The speech made by Mr George Thompson yesterday caused a sensation. For Mr Thompson, a brass band adjudicator, stood on the huge stage at the all-Welsh Royal National Eisteddfod and spoke in a banned language—English.

Bards, druids and thousands of Welsh people in the eisteddfod field at Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire could hardly believe their ears. The festival's strict speak-Welsh-only rule had been broken.

After Mr Thompson's speech, delivered in a rich Yorkshire accent, the crowd sat in stunned silence. Then the field buzzed with angry voices.

The winners given in Mr Thompson's Yorkshire voice? Ystalyfera Public Band, from near Swansea.

DAILY MAIL

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